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**DOGS IN
SPACE**

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Cover: Michael Hutchence in *Dogs in
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Nick Redlick, who edited
Cinema Papers for two years,
has returned to England to take
up a position with Screen Inter-
national. We would like to thank
Nick for all he has done for the
magazine, and wish him well
for the future.



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DOGS IN SPACE: Waiting for the sky to fall



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Michael Long

SWINBURNE
SCHOOL OF FILM AND TELEVISION
21 YEARS OLD
1986

10BA RIP? Taxing questions for the film industry

Have reports of the death of 10BA been greatly exaggerated? Is there still life in the tax rat? Taking the initiative in the debate, the Australian Film Commission has put out a discussion paper on the future of the industry which examines the options for financial assistance, and comes up with a proposal that would replace the often-maligned 10BA with a government-backed loan fund. The AFC is now canvassing industry views on its plan, and will report to the government in February.



NO PRE-SALES NO RORRIES: Genevieve Dunne tells the media how it's done

There has not been so much talk about tax since the heady days of the epicurean *Adrian of the Sea* boom, so avoidance schemes. With the Federal Government determined to increase its tax take and reduce the level of tax avoidance often coyly referred to as 'immediate tax', the sharp focus fell on the film industry and its position as Australia's second tax shelter.

During 10BA, of the income tax exemption as its chief strategy, the fact since 1980 it has been the financial backbone of the Australian film business. By providing filmmakers with tax deductions on both investment and on returns from film, the government has effectively promoted filmmaking in Australia from the status of cottage industry to a working right up there with other post-subsidy Australian Unilever-friendly, low-cost, high-risk, high-return industries. It seems there could be a bad time for tax.

With the introduction of the new marginal tax rate of 48 per cent on 1 December 1988 and the reduction of the level of tax exemption on offer for both film investment and returns, the government has all but killed 10BA, or at least given it an early retirement with the chance of limited part-time work.

Already film investment has dropped severely. The first hint of a long-term change in the Federal Government's attitude towards the film industry's cozy tax take up sent investors running to look for other tax havens in the 1988 fiscal year investment dropped to \$155 million, with most of that money being targeted at films which had qualified for the 120-30 exemption. Most expect that figure to drop dramatically next year.

The reason for the change to 10BA was that the government was convinced that in its previous incarnations 10BA was too effective and was costing too much. Arts Minister Barry Gossart summed up the feeling of the government in September last year when he said:

Convincing the thing [10BA] got up or hand, it was controlling much too much more than that it was going up and up. And after all the other tax shelters are closed off it would have gone through the roof. The whole country would have been making film.

Last month the government released figures which further support its argument. Figures (industry estimates that in 1986/87 about investment in the film industry reached its peak of \$180 million. 10BA cost the government \$155 million for lost revenues. The figures show that in 1986/87 more than 50 per cent of tax was forgone through film investment and in 1982/83 about \$80 million went uncollected. When 10BA was put in place it was thought it would cost the government about \$20 million annually. It lost revenue that the rules were framed behind when the Federal Tax Office of Australia's film industry understood the real power of pre-sales. The realisation of the amazing advantages of pre-sale took about 12 months to hit home, but when it did film and television industries began to reap a rich harvest.

Even as the Screen Production Association has argued for a long time that Treasury estimates of the film industry's cost to revenue are misleading, that the great figure tends to be rolled down and justified, and that tangibles like multiplier effect and employment and intangibles like cultural value and creative

of an Australian identity need to be taken into account.

The government perhaps quite sincerely believes the film industry has realised that it has grown in a protected environment and that now is the time for it to find a more sustainable means of both private and public funding in essence the government expects the industry to survive through the quality of its product rather than because it is the most profitable form of tax net. Whether that is a sound policy is yet to be seen. But it will not work unless the government is prepared to offer more direct assistance to Australian filmmakers.

That is the belief of the Australian Film Commission and many others involved with fund-raising and making Australian films. While many recognise the savings of 10BA and the advantages of a slowdown in industry growth, so many in the investment business believe the industry can survive in any sort of healthy form without significant government interference. For one concept perhaps the Federal Government.

That is why the AFC proposed its much talked-about, three-phase plan which coincided with the narrowing proposal that the government either through the AFC or a combination of other government-backed authorities establish what would effectively be a bank or loan-finding agent for filmmakers. The bank would be funded by an issue of government-backed bonds and the first issue would raise \$10 million. The money would be lent on three-year terms with the government guaranteeing the loans would be repaid. The government would be asked to provide \$2 million a year for a sinking fund which would cover the bank's losses and the new

lending authority would lend in the form of convertible notes, which means that if the firm was a success the bank would have the option of converting the loan into a share of the firm. Whatever profits were made would be divided back into the bank's loan fund which is an effective way of losing the industry to private enterprise.

A few budget funds for what is called high-risk drama and documentaries would also be established. Applicants for the fund would not need to prove that their project had mainstream commercial interest. The fund would have an initial appropriation of \$10 million and an estimated recurrent cost of up to \$7 million.

Looks like that's not a simple thing to do. David Gault, the AFC's policy adviser, but it is the government has a very relaxed attitude towards 10BA, and I have no reason to change it in the moment and still it is despite it the next few years look pretty bad.

The plan contains the design parameters, but leaves to the AFC last year in order for examining whether proposals.

These were a fixed cost to maintain a minimum benchmark level of production, different investment for different types of production, taking into account cost demand and revenue potential, a guaranteed period of operation of not less than five years.

David Gault and AFC chief executive Kim Williams were at the end of the Screen Production Association conference to tell their proposal to producers. Duncan, many producers found themselves over-whelmed with a sudden sense of loyalty to the tax-based system, and feelings were

ROBERT LOGETTIE & NORMAN WILKINSON on location with THE TIME GUARDIAN



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Rocking the boat at Film Australia

by Mary Colbert

Five captains voluntarily selected a sailing ship to sail their common boat, but it was Robin Hughes called for whom she accepted the position of general manager of Film Australia, the production house of the Australian Film Commission, in August last year. She took the job because of its challenges.

"I wasn't interested in being a professional manager or a business administrator, but I wanted the project," she explains. "I felt I have what to do with it. This I could be proud to do at a time when the organization needed leadership as its style, and I was valuable because I was a filmmaker and cared. I had a feeling the place had a great deal more potential than it fulfilled. Besides, there are certain times in one's life to put action where one's mouth is."

As a filmmaker she had excellent credentials (with several awards for documentaries) and 20 years industry experience (working for the ABC, BBC and others) and numerous other assignments for her career. She had spent 1977 to 1980 at Film Australia (before she set up the first animation unit), so that she was returning to familiar territory.

And she knew she was heading back into troubled waters. "There were problems across the board, people in areas that didn't possess any life inside. The previous 18 months had been spent in dispute with my predecessors; there was an acting hotel, everyone was acting. There was no internal democracy or decision. Of course all that had a major effect on morale and productivity."

"It was important to move quickly so that people could see confirmation of action and change. The first step I analyzed the situation, mostly that implemented new procedures now outlined in a manual. The major decision, totally devoid of the usual public service jargon, called Change At Film Australia."

Her previous work reorganization re-focused and articulated a clear philosophy of programming. She wanted to drag Film Australia for a stage where the results could be seen clearly (her plans don't). There is a review that is to be held in August Parliament in February.

One of the most radical moves was the restructuring of the organization. Based on a new set of commands and interrelationships. "The public service involves and the fact in staff of 150 was designed in such a way that there was a tendency to forget that the institution was there to make films. Now a place the emphasis on the end product. Basically I turned a vertical hierarchical structure into a horizontal one."

She cut through layers of middle management — what she calls the protection checking system — and



ROBIN HUGHES,
General manager of
Film Australia

assured production and management around the unit, now headed by an executive producer (with a production manager, accountants, secretary) involved in a wide range of projects. The CFA — currently Janet Bell, Ron Saunders (with others) and others — take responsibility for production, get together cases or teams, formulate policy with the general manager at weekly meetings and accept an entrepreneurial role with government departments in preparing ideas for projects.

Hughes felt there was also a need to raise the profile of the institution within the industry. "I felt we needed to be more flexible about our relationship with the industry and use filmmakers to contribute to the value of the place. I'd like to expand production and bring in new blood. Use freelance people on projects. To make it a vibrant place of innovation and excitement as in the days when people like Peter Weir, Stephen Wallace, Gill Bentley and Gillian Armstrong were here. There should be opportunities for development of new filmmakers and extension of established ones."

But eventually what does restructuring and new blood mean for her? Is the current staff? Hughes approaches that with caution.

with a plan to do this. "There's a lot of projects the same. It would be nice to have some positions filled up and active staff as consistent to be more productive we may need to do that. But I don't want people to feel nervous and we are concerned with recruitment of staff to achieve maximum efficiency. There is a review of job functions currently taking place."

To foster professional exchange with the industry Film Australia has inaugurated monthly seminars and seminars to which members of the industry are invited. So far they've focused on animation and 16mm film production with an evening on women's film scheduled for early in 1987. The aim is to discuss arguments and production values that exist.

Her major objective is to enhance quality of product and reach wider audience at less cost to the taxpayer. According to the charter, the main functions of Film Australia are to make, promote and distribute public television in particular those for government departments and those of national interest designed to interpret aspects of Australian life, a function Hughes thinks is very important in society's understanding of itself in a form accessible to the majority.

She explains that the national programs need to fulfil the purposes of the act yet be innovative and marketable. For programming she says, leading features (the place is full of emphasis on cheap, a different discipline, was moved to control but the acknowledgment for programming will be a balancing act between two priorities. On the one hand of the spectrum will be the major programs, but on the other end of the spectrum will be the independent initiatives such as Bruce Petty's *The Movers* which couldn't stand the scrutiny and otherwise wouldn't have been made. Towards that end we are prepared to take risks.

At the other end of the spectrum are the commercially viable projects which might pay for the innovative ones. It's a balance of payments situation. The balance will be independent commercial companies are working on a 16mm format project. *Witness a Soldier* a 15 part drama series of the history of the common man, celebrating those who were not centre stage figures yet contributed so much to today's Australian character.

She puts an emphasis on the need for commercial viability. It is not considered that the FFA will have commercial TV experience but contacts. This is a terrific facility but with a budget of \$6.5 million allocated this year to run the place, we need to do everything possible to generate more cash. "I'll have to get more creative going, especially after the success of our last few ventures (*Quicksilver*, *It Doesn't Run* and *Jackpot*). But, but again we need the same problem, we need to expand production but we need to be very intelligent about how to do this and discipline what is spent. A great deal of restructuring is necessary."

With that in mind she has introduced a cost effectiveness scheme and re-structured marketing. Before any money is committed to projects, marketing objectives, objectives, target audiences, and marketing proposals.

Hughes recently returned from a weekend luncheon with marketing manager Roddy White — no other up to 20 people a day in cinema days — is the UK, US and Canada to find new markets and how to make international co-productions deals.

Two major projects were discussed on a 4 x 1 hour series on Chinese history and philosophy. The other a major international co-production series with PBS, BBC and WGBH about global agricultural and environmental problems.

She is not even late why I thought her contact to it's interesting to speculate on other developments she will take place. What happens when her three-year term is up? "Once the place is moving it'll be designed to have over a someone else. The claim is to have a person, my, career, it's just happened."

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POCKETED BY PUNISH: Richard Lowenstein

BEGINNING AS "A THROW AWAY THING," RICHARD LOWENSTEIN'S SECOND FEATURE **DOGS IN SPACE** HAS BECOME "A MONSTER." BEDEVILLED WITH AN R-CERTIFICATE, THE FILM STARRING INXS LEAD SINGER, MICHAEL HUTCHENCE, MAY NEED ANOTHER LAYER OF PACKAGING IF IT IS TO ENTICE AUDIENCES BACK TO A PERIOD TOO CLOSE TO BE GLAMOROUS

PUTTING THE BITE DOGS IN SPACE

For Lowenstein, *Dogs In Space* started out as an exercise. He was living in a ramshackle house shared by musicians, punks and hippies (very similar to the one depicted in the film), collecting snippets of dialogue, recording funny incidents for a script. He intended to workshop a bunch of his actors and shoot a low budget film in a couple of weeks.

It became, however, a \$2 million feature that attracted attention, though not huge financial support, from the moment the prospectus appeared. "With a script titled *Dogs In Space* (the opening lines of which were 'Hey dog fuck show us your snitch'), an unconventional narrative, a director who didn't have a male-long track record and a producer with no track record, on paper we looked like a most unattractive proposition," says producer Glenys Rowe, whose background is in film distribution and marketing.

And add to that recipe the music, which usually shocked potential investors. "People would ask us if we were going to have good music," says Lowenstein, "and I'd say 'No, it'll be terrible, but we're going to play on the fact that it's absolutely terrible. It's like ten novelty tracks. You'll have music that ranges from the obnoxious to the sublime.' It was a strange thing to do."

Eventually the money was raised through the "unholy alliance" of the Barcoesa Film Group and Entertainment Media, with much encouragement from Fred

Schepisi. At that stage, one of the main selling points was the star, Michael Hutchence, though Glenys Rowe believes, more idealistically, that it was also the concept of youth and energy — "a new way of doing it." Most of the crew were in their twenties and not all had had experience on feature films.

The making of *Dogs In Space* is indeed full of idiosyncrasies: characteristic of the production was the fact that the shooting of particular scenes themselves turned into media events.

The scene for the opening scene of *Dogs* is a queue at the MCG, people are waiting to buy tickets for the 1979 David Bowie concert. It's wild — there are fights, fires, cars, take-away food and smashed bottles. The shot required 600 extras, all looking like punks, so the producer organised *Countdown* to put out a plea, with an offer of a free trip to Thailand. The response was huge and after making arrangements with Equity, they had crossed one of the first logistic hurdles. Three crews who wanted to film the shoot were refused access. "It was crazy," exclaims Rowe, but people were talking.

According to Lowenstein, part of the plan of attack was to create interest through word of mouth without too much paid hype. "We were always aware of the build-up to the distribution, which, of course, had a lot to do with



IN 1979 "LITTLE BANDS" LIKE WHIRLYWORLD, THE EARS AND THE BOYS NEXT DOOR WERE MAKING A LOT OF NOISE IN MELBOURNE, SPACE SHUTTLES WERE TAKING OFF, SKYLAB WAS FALLING, AND POLITICS AND FASHION WERE MUDDLED. THE LAUNCHING OF DOGS IN SPACE IS LINKED TO THE SELLING OF THIS ERA, BUT HOW AND TO WHOM?

INTO



DOGS IN SPACE: Susie Post (Anna) and Michael Henderson (Gard)

◀ DOGS IN SPACE

Glenn's "background." The technique was never promoted and it was crucial in the casting of the film: posters were up around Ferrey and St Kilda asking for committed punks to take a role in a movie.

For Rowe, the casting was one of the most difficult parts of the production "because nobody looks like that anymore. The in-look now is one of health and vitality. You're not meant to be ravaged, under-nourished and pale! So when we went to cast, all the actors were wrong. In the end, we had to literally go to the streets — rock 'n' roll gigs, schools, laundries. Much of our cast was drawn from life as it was."

The graphics that were used on the signs for finding actors are consistent with the style for all of the marching bands. It was these details that Rowe and producer Ken Lewin (who also worked as a tax manager) say they were continually trying

to. Having organised the campaign for Lowenstein's first feature, *Strikeland* (a huge country event with brass bands, union leaders and the Prime Minister), Rowe was proposed to give *Dogs In Space* "poster promotion." Australian Tour Merchandising are handling the spin-off products such as posters, cards, badges, belt buckles and T-shirts ("the shteter they are the better," according to ATM's Andrew Gaffney) with selling points in markets and record shops. One of the cruder publicity stunts was to ask owners of VWs to call radio station 3UU for a double pass to the film, £20 and a *Dogs In Space* record for their car — battered VWs are part of the *Dogs In Space* lifestyle.

The poster, says Rowe, is "Michael Hutchence looking like Jesus with a crown of thorns", an image of him more earnest than any in the film. Hutchence's opinion is that "it is too much me. I hoped I would not be exploited to such a point." But it is understandable. During the INXS singer is the lead role is regarded as their biggest crap, akin to casting Madonna in *Desperately Seeking Susan*. Hutchence is the central character, Sam. Addicted to TV, music and love, he plays care and loves recklessly, singing in the band "Dogs In Space". He is the archetype of the teen pop star many would expect Hutchence to have portrayed in his first movie role.

"I didn't want to make a *Purple Rain*," says Lowenstein. "Showing a pop star on the road to success seems to be the formula for rock 'n' roll films. I've done the opposite and shown someone on the downward. You don't get the impression that he's going to end up a famous rock singer, rather that he has many personal problems. I think kids watch films like *Save Alex* knowing that it is not like the real world and that it is designed as fantasy. But it is all a bit of a con-job. People will respond to the authenticity of Sam's character."

It is this that worried Hutchence's management company MMA, who have a reputation for keeping tight control over

their assets. Putting their boy in a film where a clear-cut image is scrapped for gritty hair, obsessive music and drugs was something of a risk.

The band was taken off the road for seven weeks so Hutchence could take on the role. "Dogs In Space was the obvious film for Michael to do because he'd been a part of that scene," says Gary Grant of MMA. "We supported him and it was a lot of unpaid hours of work for us. But the arrangement was that he didn't do any scenes which glorified the use of drugs."

Although Lowenstein had worked with MMA on the INXS video clips "Burn for You" and "What You Need", he says they were all "a little nervous" about the feature. "They liked the script and always thought it was very funny. But we did give them eight of approval over the drug and sex scenes — they were worried

about that. They didn't want hard-core porn, which I can understand! They probably would have been a lot less co-operative if Michael hadn't been so keen about the film."

Hutchence has analysed the part of Sam to the last poster, dismissing any possibility of ever playing "a groovy guy in a sports car." "That isn't what I got into movies for. It's not a whim. Acting is what I always wanted to do." He says his is an unusual character who survives in the middle of chaos. "Sam is influenced by different things. He glorified Anna (played by Stefanie Posch), space, dogs and crack. At the beginning of the film he is a nihilist, but he is shocked into wanting something."

Hutchence feels that *Dogs* may be alienating to many INXS fans but makes no apologies. "You can't say 'no, no, no'



to drugs. It's better to present a balanced account and give the facts. The film shows people taking drugs and having a good time, but it also shows the consequences."

This is not an interpretation echoed by the Film Classification Board who assigned the film an R-rating in early November. They found that, "notwithstanding the final element of tragedy, the reckless depiction of the youth/drug/music subculture glamorized the lifestyle sufficiently to make it appear not only acceptable but also 'trendy' and attractive." Drugs were seen to be "a pleasant adjunct to daily life." Even after an appeal by the distributors, Hoyts, to the Films Board of Review (who did give a more measured, appreciative account) the classification was upheld.

At the time of going to press, Rowe had

written letters to the Federal Attorney-General Lionel Bowen and the board's chairman Peter Sheehan asking for a reconsideration of the rating of a disclaimer about the use of drugs was inserted at the beginning of the film as well as on the publicity.

The decision, Lowenstein believes, is inescapable and reinforces an R classification a disapplying the teen audience that the film was made for. Rowe, though, she is still continuing the appeal as the last possible manner. Most work on stereotypes based on the R-rating. "It necessarily makes us more specific in the targeting of our campaign. We were going to have people handing out leaflets on the last day of school and obviously that can no longer happen. We're going to have to shift our energy from that end of the market to the top end."

She will be asking press not so much based on Michael Hutchence, as Richard Lowenstein as a filmmaker. And even-tempered the Board's decision thinks "all the thirteen year olds will still get the film on video, and those that don't, will seek it with their school uniforms in their bag."

"The classification did make Hoyts nervous, but they didn't drop the picture. We've still got the apartment release time (set back to 1 January from the original release date 4 December) and the same amount of promotion."

"Everybody thinks 'Michael Hutchence' therefore it's got to be for a teen audience. In fact the film is about adult concepts. Hutchence is in it and, yes, it might have been a bit of twelve year olds had gone along, but they wouldn't have liked it."

"I always wanted to stress the formal innovation in the film — the intelligence of craft — and I guess I was at odds with the distributors who wanted a wide audience by promoting teenage heaven — sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. I would hope it is received with the same degree of seriousness as a film like *George Harrison: Three Times Over*."

Tony Melrose, general sales manager of Hoyts Distributors, says he always intended to give the film a "specialized" release and that the R-rating is not likely to reduce the number of screens. It will, however, affect the season times and it means that the trailer and the video clip (made in conjunction with the film) can only be shown before other films with restricted classification.

Melrose feels that *Dogs In Space* has the potential to be a cult film — "there's a chance that it will be the *Easy Rider* of the eighties" — and is quick to point out that INXS has not only teenage girls' but now has his eye on the long term market.

What the makers of the film don't want is for people to think they are going to see a "dirty movie." "They'll be terribly disappointed. At least the film has an energy (even if it goes out with an 'R') and people respond to it in that wrong way, then that suits me better than is going out half-baked as an 'M.'" Rowe says.

The classification does mean more of a battle on the promotion side. The *Daily Mirror* ran a headline "In Black! Hutchence Misses Ban. Idol's debut film rapped over drugs, sex scenes" and TV Host reported "Michael Hutchence has out as heroin."

The lip side of the *Dogs In Space* image is, of course, the music. The only for the film was from a song that Melrose heard. The film used to play and Lowenstein narrates the words "Dogs In Space" sprayed on the footpath in front of the band's house. With the help of Oliver Olson (who used to play in one of the "taste bands" Whirlwind) the music of a particular era was moved, bands like Primitive Calculators, Thrush and the Cunts and Tee-Fee To Fie Through the Door. While some of the music was



◀ DOGS IN SPACE

Intermission, where all the hands went on to "great things!" and *Dogs In Space* sets out to capture that whimsical and unpredictable.

The live music has been re-recorded and many of the tracks are re-mixed versions of the original recordings. Two 'Whirlwind' songs 'Win/Lose' and 'Windows to the World' had been recorded on cheap eight track machines. The original tapes were found, transferred onto 24-track and then re-mixed. In a scene filmed at the Sawview Ballroom, music and dialogue were re-recorded together using an 8 track pipe recorder, which created chaos, but also gave a very authentic feel.

"It is interesting using music that is five or six years old," says Lowenstein.

"The film portrays a musical development that was years ahead of its time. You play a new and everyone thinks they've great songs. Play a Charlie Allen song and people think it's groundbreaking!"

The *Dogs In Space* album is being handled by MAMA and is set for release in January. There is also a single and video clip for 'Roses for the Memory' song by Buckstone and written and produced by Mike Olson. The video portrays Buckstone as himself rather than as Sam. "I didn't want to do a normal clip where we just showed parts of the film," says Lowenstein. "We took black and white

rolls from the film and hand-painted them, like old period photographs — but of junk! It's more nostalgic than the film — which is pretty nostalgic. Watching it is like sitting through memories and the song is very emotional." Buckstone describes the song as the most "poignant" piece of music on the soundtrack and thanks the clip works well as another interpretation of the film. "It will add a lot more interest and hopefully it will mean something outside alternative circles."

But again the audience has been disappointed. With an R-rating, the video can't be used for general exhibition because it is still regarded as an overt trailer for the film. In case, however, be shown on television. Perhaps Goodhouse will have to come to the rescue again.

Outside the film's home town, the plans have not been modified. For Rowe, every market has to be approached differently. "The obscurity of the film necessitated an having a particular marketing strategy. It's not a general film, not one that you can immediately transpose into every place. We've searched for distributors who are entrepreneurs, in the old fashioned sense, who can see where a film fits in and then exploit it to the hilt. I'm very confident about places like the UK, France and West Germany. Some aspects

of the film might look familiar to a small group of people in Melbourne but there are some very odd things in it."

"We might have a problem in the States because of the language in the film. We may have to do a modified sound track. But we have targeted who we want and we'll walk straight on. It's not an uncertain move for us." While the producers can rely partly on the popularity of INXS, the biggest catch is advertising. It is simply not worth spending big money on a mainstream release for such a small film.

In the end, Lowenstein might be selling back to the Americans their own space programmes. Although it was never written into the script, Lowenstein has cut space footage (courtesy of NASA) into the movie story. Instead of 'Coke to black' you get a shot of Skylab or Spatnik. In the context of the film, it is fortunate, a suggestion of a dream, other world.

"Everyone said to sit up and watch the space shuttle taking off. Space was really big. Now space shuttles take off all the time and it's only when they blow up that everyone notices. I liked all that noisy stuff. You never wanted to miss it!" says Lowenstein. The Richmond household depicted in *Dogs In Space*, full of the weirdest collection of people, is like a space ship "totally alien from everything around it." But now only the bar-office will let us know if it is going to take off.



For the title sequence of *Dogs In Space*, Ray Strong was given a intuitive brief. Lowenstein wanted something slick, an image that contrasted with the mess and chaos of the opening events. "The glassiest space ship effect you've ever seen, something huge and exciting that will overpower the grittiness of the characters' lifestyle." The result, they say, is "magic".

Strong produced the flashy chrome logo on a motion control rig of his own design. Controlled by an IMC computer that can also be attached to his Oschery animation stand, Strong has been developing his multi-axis system over the last few years.

The title was a good test of a motion-control pan and tilt head that, Strong explains, "was really fancy. I looked at designs in London and Los Angeles and built something that was much more compact, lightweight and robust and driven by motors that

the Americans didn't think possible. This has been a good run for it, the accuracy of the motor is spot on." The attraction of computer motion control rigs is, once a movement is programmed, it can be repeated again and again, with only the mechanical tolerances of the rig moving on the rails, and motors turning shafts, that could introduce errors. On the *Dogs In Space* title, this allowed the camera to move over large chrome letters (made from brass by Henry Smith) and produce multiple runs with effects such as different coloured light, star filters and, most importantly, a black-lit run to create a silhouette matte shot. The matte is used in the laboratory to print the lettering over the selected live-action background. The filming took place over a week with Strong and DOP Andrew de

Great working on the frame by frame animation move, to produce over eight different front-lit effect rolls that were combined by Kevin Williams at VFL on the optical printer.

"We were using a 15mm Nikon lens, right up against the letters, and the move took place over 18 feet of track so that the image slides from extreme close-up beneath the camera and goes to infinity. The components were mounted on clear perspex and when we did the backlight run we found the best white diffusing material was a piece of vacuum forming plastic. We could only use a small area so we had to have extensive hand-drawn junk-wipes to hold back the area around the white."

While it works well over the live action, Strong prefers the version produced for the trailer, which is on a black background, and shows off all the complexity and midnight roll that was put into it.

Paul Harkin

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Screenplay: JAMES L. ROSEN, JAMES L. ROSEN, JAMES L. ROSEN, JAMES L. ROSEN

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GOING SOUTH: The

The South Australian Film Corporation made its name with historical features, won a marketing award for its campaign with *Blue Fin*, got in at the beginning of the mini-series boom with *Sara Dane*, and had its fingers burned with *Robbery Under Arms*. What's happening now? In the first of a series on the state film bodies, Philippa Hawker goes South.



Headon Studios manager Michael Fowler presides over the Theatre 1 console. Pic: Len Szabolcs

Adelaide Connection

In the foyer of Adelaide's Heron Studios, a grim image of Edward Woodward dominates the theatre complex posters, certificates and photographs from South Australia Film Corporation products are very much to evidence, but it is *Bomber Marston* that seems to have lasted of all.

Bomber Marston symbolises the peak of a phase of the corporation's activity when it was synonymous in many people's eyes with successful Australian filmmaking. It is a phase that overviews in the SAFC acknowledges has passed, when a spate of feature films worked at the box office and won the critics, and made an impact overseas. "Nobody saw how the reputation we had then, except perhaps Kennedy Miller, they seem to be able to do no wrong," says SAFC managing director John Morris. "But we're as the funny little organisation we were then. I can't help being nostalgic about the early days when we only had a tiny staff, and we were doing everything for the first time."

We were the only state corporation and we had the pick of any film we wanted. With *Penal At Mornington*, the only place they could get money was from us, and the only way we'd give it to them was if they filmed in South Australia. In those days we didn't have any difficulty getting a contract with Boney Barendse for three films. Imagine trying to do that now."

The SAFC was the first state corporation, set up under the Duncan government in

1972, given the task of creating a film industry in South Australia virtually from scratch, and paying at one way. The Premier predicted that the corporation would show a profit within ten years. It has spent very much in the making phase, with virtually no financial support from the state, and it has always maintained a vigorously commercial outlook. It is the only corporation which produces its own films, and maintains production facilities.

To characterise an approach as "commercial" is not to say anything very specific, the term can be used equally for prices or blarney. An attitude to marketing strategy has always been an important part of SAFC strategy from the outset. The corporation has had a marketing division from its earliest days, and its handling of *Sunday Too Far Away* is said to have contributed considerably to the film's success in Australia. At the same time, executive staff in the SAFC wryly acknowledge that *Sunday* would probably not get made now, it would be regarded as not sufficiently "commercial".

It was nothing but unashed commercialism that led the SAFC into a partnership with soft-core filmmaker John Lunnard, resulting in his films *Priority* and *Perfidy Boney*. It was not a particularly happy collaboration, but it is not one that many people would consider typical of the SAFC.

Sunday Too Far Away was the first Australian film to be invited to Cannes. The films with which the SAFC was associated in

its first few years, like *Sunday*, like *Penal At Mornington*, like *Bomber Marston*, like *Storm Boy*, gave it a successful profile and a specific image: an organisation specialising in historical features, in literary adaptations, in graceful good taste productions that found an audience. "Those were heady days in the early seventies, with three or four successes in a row," recalls one SAFC staff member. "But once those, the corporation was an unwelcome reminder that didn't know where it was going."

Those "heady days" were followed by a spate of critical and commercial failures: *Davey*, *The Money Movers*, *The Fourth Wish*, *Worked at Shadow*, *Frontline* (its last the SAFC period's first and only profit in 1981-82). In the 1984-85 financial year the State Government gave the corporation a grant of 1050,000 for basic administrative costs and assistance with project development, and it committed to providing the grant until the end of the 1986-87 financial year. It also relieved the company of its deleterious loan debt, capitalising an amount of \$6 million.

"Those failures gave everyone a sense of reality, they showed you couldn't be right all the time," says a philosophical staff member. "But there was a lot of pain at the time."

For the 1980s, the corporation found a new direction, and a new home: it turned its attention to television, and it moved to a disused Philips factory in Hendon. 12



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MADE: Flying Bombie Down, (Blue Fin) Sunday Too Far Away



SOUNDS OF HENDON Theatres 1, dubbing machinery, sound stage one (top to bottom)

cinemas from the centre of Adelaide. Jack Blair came from Clarendon to produce *Sore Daze*, the SAFC's first excursion into the mass-market, once again a period piece adapted from a book.

Until then, the SAFC had operated from a converted cinema, with a sound stage in the stage area and a mixing theatre in the dress circle. "There was something ironic about making films in a cinema," says Michael Hendon, who joined the SAFC in 1974 as manager of technical services, and is now studio manager at Hendon.

There was also something claustrophobic about it: the sound area was getting smaller, as sets stored around it took up more and more space. The new premises were found and dropped during up between July and November 1980. Building began in November 1980, and shooting started on *Sore Daze* in January 1981. "With everything more or less finished" Hendon Studios is a separate division within the corporation.

The corporation is particularly proud of the sound division, which includes a Dolby mixing studio, a post-sync recording studio with separate control room for the sound recorded and two sound stages, a special TV mixing studio is planned. Hendon also includes workshops, a wardrobe department, editing rooms, production offices and a kitchen, which at the moment is well occupied by the fans of the century Sydney Rocks set from the SAFC's *Phantom Movie Row*, and a rock pool set used in the science fiction feature, *The Time Guardians*.

Hendon obviously needs a steady flow of productions to provide an economic base for the SAFC. At the moment it is working at full stretch. Three features now in post production that were shot in South Australia and used Hendon's facilities were offered the endorsement of non-debitables submitted by the corporation.

Hendon also houses a couple of independent companies, marketing manager Jim Henry runs his own company within the complex, in close touch of drama production Jack Blair. Hendon is home to a small animation company, Anifex, run by Richard Christy and Michael Casack, whose clay animation short, *Walking Marbles*, made for the SAFC, won several AFI awards. The SAFC had hoped to make a feature length animation, *The Sweeney's Scrapbook*, with Anifex, but the project had to be abandoned for lack of funds.

The State Film Library is also a part of Hendon. In recent years it has been making a determined attempt to woo the public, identifying target audiences and preparing campaigns aimed at them, and generally trying to set up a range of programmes with extremely limited resources.

Jim Henry worked in America as a marketing consultant for the AFC for many years, and now runs the independent consultancy, with the SAFC as his principal client. (He also acts as consultant to Film Victoria, and represents a number of small independent producers.) "It's no accident that the corporation is concentrating on TV, our first love is the cinema, but we are also businessmen who want to make a profit," he says. "I have quite a lot of input into what the corporation actually does... If I say 'Yes, OK, that will work, but only if you give

me this director and that actor, because I can't tell it without those impediments," it takes time.

"The SAFC is very conscious of what the market will accept, and tries to provide material that is as close as possible to that."

"We're not truly government-supported, unlike the other corporations, we're seen as a state resource and get we get a little help from the public purse."

"Sometimes the Australian industry thinks of us as subsidising businessmen who don't look for what we do, and I suspect our colleagues in Melbourne think of us as a monolith," he says.

The calculations don't always work out, of course; the most notable example is the SAFC's recent history in the *Robbery Under Arms* saga. It looked at first sight like the classic SAFC property: adapted from Neil Blomfield's novel and turned into a book-movie epic, with elephants, a lot of balloons and Sam Neill. It was to be a six-hour miniseries, but the budget was too high, and it was shot for theatrical and television release by two different directors. Robert Holmes a Court's (ITC Entertainment) took on picture distribution and put up half the \$7 million plus budget. The film tank in the cinema, the corporation now acknowledges that the doubling-up was a disastrous approach.

ITC went to invest in another SAFC project, a \$12 million, 10-part series of television thrillers, but that then fell through, leaving the SAFC in with a blank, production-loss 1985.

This gap in production caused considerable concern in the state, particularly among film unions. Although the corporation has always explained that television is a safer director to take, it proved not to be the case here.

Equity and the Australian Theatrical and Amusement Employers' Union both expressed fears for the future of the industry

in South Australia, following the problems of 1985.

Equity state secretary Colleen Ross says that some of these fears have been allayed by a busy 1986, but maintains that when action taker off in early 1987, the industry employees in South Australia might be facing difficulties again. "But the whole industry has its problems at the moment," she says.

The corporation's relationship with local filmmakers has been a delicate one. It is acknowledged that the SAFC has played a major role in setting up and maintaining the industry in the state, in providing training and job opportunities. At the same time, there have been producers who have regarded the SAFC as a competitor, and feel that its role has made it hard for other producers to establish themselves.

In the corporation's solid days, any filmmaker from South Australia was thought to be part of the SAFC, a viewpoint that kind of central role in people's minds.

It is also acknowledged that some good and experimental filmmakers have not been particularly well-served in the state. Even the South Australian Film and Television Financing Fund, set up 18 months ago to provide funds for features and television, and to send projects with wrong pants, has an awkwardly convoluted structure. Institutions like the South Australian Media Resource Centre and Flinders University, which provide some focus for filmmakers working outside the mainstream, do not have production resources or funds.

Jack Blair says that he feels the corporation could have done more to foster local talent.

On the other hand the corporation's documentary division has been a steady source of work for local filmmakers.

At first, the SAFC acted as producer, now the documentaries, mostly government sponsored, are put out on a "concept tender system", where three producers are chosen

from a tender list and invited to attend a briefing meeting by the relevant sponsor.

The SAFC annually has 24 or 25 projects going in a year. The budgets vary greatly, from a remarkably low-cost eight hours of television for \$14,000 to a 20-minute documentary costing \$120,000.

The SAFC outlook for the future will put the emphasis on television, although there have been some gestures towards feature production in recent years.

Although the director of the miniseries and so-called "event television" has been predicted, Jack Blair is still confident that the expensive and expensive format will be a market. He would love to put it across together, but so far has not found the right project, he says. "We are not and never will be, a Granada or a Cleveland's. They're the department stores of TV, we're the upmarket boutiques."

Projects in hand at the moment include a miniseries on the life of war photographer Neil Davis ("a real life *Greenland* disaster"), according to Jim Henry, a science fiction minister for children, scripted by Tony Morphett, a feature film on the tradition of *The Godmothers*, and a program based on the autobiography of a young woman doctor on Kangaroo Island.

John Morris says he "firmly believes that for the corporation we should concentrate on TV, future films should be left to independent. They are a high risk, and they don't offer the sort of return certainty that we need to get work going through the studios."

"The time will come when the SAFC will not have to produce, when there is enough independent work going through the studio mills and then we can pick and choose."

"Locally our reputation is high at the moment, because we have \$25 million worth of productions happening here. But twelve months ago we were in a place where there was nothing."



TWO FACES OF THE SAFC: Blasker Morris and Pacific Games (top: *Greenland* disaster, top right)



AGED 31 AND WITH TWO FEATURES UNDER HIS BELT — THE CULT MOVIE **REPO MAN** AND **SID AND NANCY**, THE STORY OF THE FATAL LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN THE SEX PISTOLS' SID VIGOUS AND HIS GROUPIE GIRLFRIEND, NANCY SPUNGEN — ALEX COX HAS EMERGED AS ONE OF THE MOST QUIRKY DISTINCTIVE FILMMAKING VOICES OF THE EIGHTIES. **NICK RODDICK** TALKS TO HIM ABOUT THE FILMS, BUT MAINLY ABOUT **SID AND NANCY**, WHICH OPENS HERE SOON.

Look at that," says Harry Dean Stanton as Riffle Barrows in *Repo Man*, pointing to a group of *Reinhardt* *Angels* in a cloud on a front porch. "Look at those analbeats over there. Ordinary fucking people! I hate 'em! You see," he goes on, "an ordinary person spends his whole life avoiding these situations. A repo man spends his life getting into these situations."

Tension is important to the people in Alex Cox's films. Sid and Otto (Manson and Fierstein), Neil and Nancy (Gray Nelson and Christopher Walken) in the film of the same name) keep you on tension — tension between each other, and above all between them and a world they constantly provoke, but that they simply let them be. In *Repo Man*, however, Sid and Otto represent one form: permanent delinquents of an increasingly violent and dangerous disposition, until they end up, as if inevitably, with the mystifying '64 Malibu and its *Phantoms*' host. From the outset, Sid and Nancy abuse others and their own bodies to the point of self-destruction. Take the scene a little under half-way through, where Sid is beaten up on a railroad track by three pink-hating Texas good old boys. Michael (McLaren) (David Hayman) looks on. "We loves it," comments Mike, before finally dispersing the attackers with a hand-gun impersonation. If the ordinary people didn't let him back, the tension would be gone.

Alex Cox's style as a filmmaker is itself a matter of tension and a struggle against conformism: the ordinariness of British reality, and the ordinariness of Hollywood non-sensibilities. Strung out between the two, it draws its strength from being neither British Film nor New World — another stark picture of two decisions of British TV thriller (like, say, *Stephen Frears*'s *The Hit*, nor a reworking of the classic Hollywood model to the rhythm of a rock soundtrack (like, say, John Landis's *Love the Night*). An *Repo Man* turned and Sid

and Nancy confirms, Cox it, for all his punkish language, something of a romantic, both in the old sense (of the early nineteenth-century relic) and in a new one which it is probably too soon to define. But *Repo Man*'s Otto and Sid and Nancy's spontaneous leads definitely go through a kind of romantic agency. Their starting point is ordinariness. Otto's parents are bourgeois, TV-addicted San Francisco Valley suburbanites. Sid's Mom is a working-class Cockney with brighty parents on the walls. Nancy's Grandma and Grandpa have a real nice house with a moose room. From ordinariness, Otto and Sid and Nancy pass through degradation, but a kind of transcendence is what they achieve: both films end with a moment of romantic release.

A not particularly transcendental individual with a lot of teeth and hair, Alex Cox himself knows all about ordinariness. He was born (like me, I should probably add) on The Wirral, a shabby peninsula of land between the River Mersey and the River Mersey in north-west England. The Wirral probably never had much to recommend it in the first place; but, over the mid-nineteenth century, it has been a destination for Liverpool, to which it is linked by the Mersey Tunnel, the same-abbreviated "Trey" (mean the Mersey), and one of the most spectacularly antiquated underground railway systems in the world. The Wirral has what is probably England's highest concentration of middle-middle and lower-middle-class homes. "Harold Wilson was our first loved boy," says Cox of his old alma mater, Wirral Grammar, "and look what happened to him."

Cox escaped to Oxford, where he studied law and began to desert Britain. "It was the looking back I ever got," he says, "being there and finding out that ordinariness wasn't really very interesting, but that there was all this drama going on you could plunge into." After Oxford, he studied film for a year

at the University of Bristol, then got a Fulbright Fellowship to study it at the University of California at Los Angeles.

At UCLA, Cox made a short, *Sleep in for Steven* ("It's basically the story of a Lenny going mad in LA"), then wrote a couple of scripts that were never made: one for MGM, another, *The Happy Man*, about the last hour before the bank-into New York. It was for Adrian Lyne, but he made *Flashdance* instead. You can see all of this in *Repo Man*: the living-on-the-edge frenzy of the machine age, the Lenny made-over by LA. To an extent, Cox plays the role himself. His screen, after nearly a decade away in the West Coast than *The Wirral*, however, between head-bash and free-puffball, and he wears — or we wear — when I talked to him — a baseball cap given him by one of the Los Angeles cops assigned to traffic control on *Repo Man*. It has the LAPD shield on it, and a version of the department's motto, "To serve and to protect," it says, adding "Where we fucking feel like it."

Sid and Nancy, though, for all that, over half of it is set in the United States (mostly New York), in a very English film. "I don't think I could have got the Sid and Nancy story happening in the United States," says Cox. "There's a slightly younger contingent of people involved in production in England." Not at Goldcrest, though, where he first took the project. "The people at Goldcrest are like Hollywood, it's just as difficult to get anything on there. Goldcrest showed us the door at a very early stage. It's funny, because Goldcrest are now the international sales agents. But, man, they loved this film! I tell you, they didn't want to do it at all. Companies like Smith Jones finally made the film, as they did *The Hit* and *Freightmiser*, and who are currently working with Australian producer David Elford on the memoirs, *Fields of Fire* are fairly big people."

Strangely enough, it is the true that Cox and his co-writer were first peddling

NEVER MIND T



PRETTY VACANT
Chris Webb (Nancy),
Gary Dickinson (pic)

THE BOLLOCKS

< SID AND NANCY

the idea instead, there was apparently another slasher story in the ailing: "I wish they'd made it," says Cox. "Because it would have been so great if there were two Sid and Nancy films at the same time. The other one was supposed to be happening was *Delirious* and Virgin. Rupert Everett was Sid, and maybe Madonna as Nancy!"

In the end, Cox did have one minor screw-up with *Zenith*. That was near the title. He wanted — he still wants — the film to be called *Love Rite*, which is the title of the song (by ex-Gloucester singer Joe Strummer) which plays over the final credits. He describes the current title as "naïf", an all-purpose English colloquialism which implies (among other things) a degree of immaturity and naivety. *Obscene Rite*, the movie, for example, is pretty naïf. So, according to Cox, is *Sid and Nancy*, the title.

Cox's collaborator on the script that would end up with the naïf title was a fellow UCLA film school graduate, Abbie Woolf, who has a credit on "Vulgar Connoisseur", on *Rape Music*, in which she and Cox also play the car-wash attendants. On *Sid and Nancy*, Woolf's name "appears on the credits about five times," says Cox, "including 'Native Wrangler', which is her most prized credit. She got so excited when she found out that Sid and Nancy had a car, because it meant that she got to find the battery. She still has it. Then, of course, she negotiated for it to receive a credit. And introducing the young Cox Young."

"When I went back to London at the end of '84 for the London Film Festival [where *Rape Music* had its British premiere], I met people who had known Sid and Nancy. I started interviewing them, because this was something I'd wanted to do for a long time. I'd compiled a big ream of interview material, but I wanted to write the script with somebody else, and with a woman. Because I'd known Abbie for a long time — we used to go to punk gigs all the time; we'd have kiplings and girlfriends for quite a while — there were lots of reasons why we should do it together."

"We met in New York. We stayed at the Chelsea Hotel [where, apparently, they found the words "Sid was innocent Nancy R.I.P." scrawled behind the mirror in their room — or that's what the film's pressbook says] and wrote a very detailed treatment together. Then she flew back to LA and I did the first draft on my own. I sent her a copy and she wrote me this grim letter about how it was really bad and I had to do better. Then we met again in London and did the second draft together. It was really, really good, writing with her, because not only is she a very good writer, but the two of us together were very natural of each other's naïf. There wasn't that censorship of, you know "Well, I'd have no criticism anything here, but..." You don't have to do that; you can be very straight."

Now was Woolf's involvement restricted to the script. "The scene with the chashins falling from the sky is entirely her idea. We had another scene to link the bits before and after that, but we



couldn't get to sleep it, because we were literally leaving New York that afternoon, and there was no time to do an elaborate thing involving windows breaking and lots of extras and a fire and all that. Albie said: 'Well, what about Sid and Nancy kissing in an alley with dustbins falling from the sky?' And I said: 'Thank, Lord that's that! Albie, the same where Nancy goes to Max's Kebab Shop and persuades the manager to let her have a gig was something. Albie actually impressed with Chloë and Joanna McCarthy, who plays Nancy's friend, Trish. I, the director, who gets compensated for these things, had nothing to do with that scene at all. Albie directed it, and they did it themselves.'

And then Nancy says about the history of punk, and it isn't a begin about the Sex Pistols it's a remnant. But the punk bit is crucial, says Cox. 'I think that punk was certainly the last thing that happened in music on the streets, maybe the last thing that had happened since Elvis and Eddie Cochran and Little Richard. Punk was much more interesting than the Beatles or the Rolling Stones. For probably more a Clash has than a Pistols fan on the coast, because they had more of a body of work' — immediately after the *Guerrilla Film Festival* (where Sid and Nancy was in the Director's Rooming), Cox took off for Spain to make a low-budget, spoof western, *Stright to Hell*, with Jon Strummer as its star (and with special appearances by Alex Corbett, Dennis Hopper, Jim Jarmusch, George Jones and The Pogues) — 'that that album, *Never Mind the Bollocks*, hasn't aged at all. It's just as good now as it was then.'

'I loved that movie. But, then again, this isn't the story of the Sex Pistols in their own political-historical context, because that's already been told by *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*, *Jukebox*, *Rock & Nancy Spectacular*, the documentary, *The Decline of Western Civilization*. You could begin the film with a one-minute thing all. This is the real England. There's no smiling unemployment. It's a necessity. It's the Silver Jubilee.' — all that. But then you'd be going over old territory. We're talking about the Sex Pistols in their time all.'

Inevitably, though, the anti-political-historical context creeps up from time to time in the film, like with the methadone clinic man (Cy Richardson, owner of *Stright to Hell*), who tells them that heroin is a government-backed drug, keeping them under control and preventing them from committing their 'anarchy' (he's already a clean Pistols fan). 'At that stage,' says Cox, 'your sympathy should be on both sides, in the sense that, if you're with Sid and Nancy, you're going to resent that guy a little bit, so let's give them all this stuff. And yet, it's all true! Flying Tigers, that wonderful corporation founded by a couple of World War II flying aces, was a fucking heroin-flying racket financed by the CIA. The CIA used that such a big hooker, they don't even know how much money they've got, and the reason they don't know is that they're tied up on the heroin and cocaine trade. Everything that guy says is true. Of course, it's a bit more to expect the audience to take notes at that point. But it's true: heroin is a means of

control used by governments to keep their supplies popularizing in order and to stop them taking to the streets and causing havoc.'

Radioactive material and gun laws (Rage Man) and heroin addiction (Sid and Nancy) are the reality. But, like *Rage Man*, Sid and Nancy represent and enthusiastically taken off from realism into a dream-like, surreal reality. One of the first times it does so is after the Pistols' infamous scene on the Thames, which led to the arrest of all those on board the boat. In the film, though, as the summer docks and the police stream onto the landing stage, chasing and swamping at the dream-worlder punkers, Sid and Nancy, some would call each other, follow a megalomaniac through the mayhem, uncontacted and unobserved, as the camera tracks away to heart of them.

Cox tends to be aware about this and other moments, like the one where Nancy first starts off to buy drugs for Sid, hopping onto a big red London bus that appears as if by magic in a street down which London Transport has recently never rolled. 'Yeah!' he squeals in delight, 'and it's on the wrong side of the road, and nobody's getting off!' But here, I ask pertinently, does he set about creating the kind of dream-space London? 'You just forget to get in the street,' explains Cox, 'that's how you forget to get in the people getting off the bus.'

In the second half of the film, however, after Sid sings 'My Way' in Paris, Cox admits there is a definite change of tone. 'Again, it's Albie's idea,' he says. 'His thing was once they're in that room in the Chelsea Hotel, even as Room 202, before they get to 104, you should never really be sure if they're in the room or not at all when they're in the alley, or the second guy in Albie's, when he does 'I Want to Be Your Boy', or in the subway — you're never sure if it's really happening or if it's in their heads.'

This uncertainty was a feature of *Rage Man*, too, especially towards the end. But in general, Cox's approach to filming was different the second time, as well as different to the way he'd planned it. 'On *Rage Man*,' he says, 'I would draw little storyboards and stuff. I'd get someone to draw me in, and I'd do the storyboards on the way. I'd show them to Rocky (Mader, the DOP), and Rocky would go, 'Ah, yes, yes, yes', and we'd set up the shots more or less according to the strategy. On Sid and Nancy, I turned up on the first day with my little sketchbook drawn on the back of the envelope to show Roger (Drakins). He saw this thing, and he laughs. Then he shows it to his assistant cameraman and they all laugh. Then they tear it up and throw it away. So, I realize 'Ah, right! It isn't going to be like that then! Good!'

'We realized, as well, that in *Rage Man*, a lot of the film is two people sitting side by side in a car, talking to each other. But this is, like, three or four or five or six people in a room, until the end, when they get to the Chelsea Hotel. We were in more locations quite often, and nothing was really planned or worked out, so it's largely improvisation. We didn't know what the scene were going to do until they started up and started doing it. So it ended up being 60-70% shot in the hand, or on the shoulder, which wasn't what we

anticipated. We had all these dolly tracks and dollies and cranes that just went to waste. We used the cranes to drop the shutters from.'

'I listened to a lot of people while we were shooting — Albie more than anyone else, because otherwise she'd have taken the better home. But I'd listen to anyone — more so, I think, on that one than on *Rage Man*, because you get more confident after a while. About your point to persuade, you know, about your power being usurped or your perspective being displaced or whatever.'

'What about the end?' 'Cory was a stage actor with the Royal Shakespeare Company. He's also done some television. Massimo, for Mike Leigh, and a film called *Remembrance*. Chloë is a stage actor from New York. She currently lives in LA. When I saw her the first time, I thought 'That is probably Nancy'. With Gary, I wasn't sure, because he doesn't really look like Sid — would he grow? Then, he has one of those incredible smiles that goes all the way up to his ears. Bruce Schofield, who plays Johnny's brother from *The World, Inc.* He's a bit of a misanthrope, but he's a nice guy, and a good actor. He was really on that TV screen, and I think he's going to do *Hamlet* at the Liverpool Playhouse.'

Chris Haskins, the Sex Pistols' drummer, as advertised on the film's poster. But the band's most famous surviving member, John Lydon, alias Johnny Rotten, wouldn't have anything to do with it. 'Was this because it was inaccurate?' 'I think that it's probably not factually correct in terms of the rock 'n' roll history of the Pistols,' says Cox, 'although a bit of it is. I think Sid whisked Mark Kent of the NME with a fake cheque or something. We have him but Rick Smith with his bass guitar. And the Texas tour is fairly accurate. I think they played a maximum six or seven hours, including one called 'The Longhorn' in Dallas, which had more than 20,000 people. We have 'Jack Ruby's Old Town'. And, even if Sid didn't make through a plasticizer sign, he certainly jumped through a load of windows and, you know, did his hair to look himself up in the domain of Nancy.'

'As for John, I finished him down in New York, showed him the script and listened to his objections. We'd get his character wrong, in the sense that we'd written him like some sort of disintegrating person — a sort of 'Workaholic' Revolutionary Party kind of guy. He said: 'I don't need to use long words to get my point across'. So Albie and I went through and changed out all the long words and put in Albie words instead. He's seen the film. He doesn't like it, and I don't blame him, because it's a big chunk of his life, and Sid was his best friend. You know, I have a couple of friends who are in their early twenties and are, like, 'I'll do anything! I'll drink my first in the film!' If these guys ended up puking and dead, then I think Albie would have been more than a little about this. I'd be very very distressed and angry. So I don't blame John at all. But I hope that, in the end, even if he doesn't like it, he at least will believe it was meant sincerely. It wasn't meant as, like, an exploitative thing.'

Never a director to fall back on his laurels, Roman Polanski has managed to surprise almost everyone with his latest film, *Pirates*, a fairly straightforward swashbuckling adventure movie starring Walter Matthau. Dan Fainaru met up with Polanski in Cannes.

FROM HELL TO

With every new film he makes, it seems that Roman Polanski has to deal with the same question: "Mr. Polanski, why did you depart from your usual style and make a movie like this?" In the past, he has been inclined to respond with an abrupt "Why not?" At the Cannes press conference after the screening of *Pirates*, however, he had worked out a somewhat fuller answer.

"To understand how I pick the subjects for my films," he said, "I must explain I am first a spectator and only then a film director. I like movies. I go to the cinema a lot, and when I do a picture, it is because this is something I felt I would like to see on the screen."

Pirates was something he had started cooking up after finishing *Christiane*, in conjunction with Gérard Beaulieu, with whom he used to write scripts years ago. "I felt at the time that audiences were in the right frame of mind for this kind of movie," he says, "as a reaction against the many heavy, message-laden films. The project did not work out for a variety of reasons, the most obvious being the budget involved. That was before the Lucas-Spielberg syndrome took possession of Hollywood. But, when I saw the tremendous success of *Star Wars*, I felt completely justified in my opinion, because what is *Star Wars*, if not swashbuckling in space?"

Polanski went back to the old classic movies, read the literature, learnt the subject thoroughly. Reviewing the old movies was less of a thrill than he thought it would be, he says; there were very few memorable bits. "But, having written the script and become attached to the characters and the situations, not belief in the project grew, and with it my anxiety." When he was not really prepared for were the problems that would accompany the *Pirates* project. "Had I known from the very beginning that this would mean ten years of struggle, I would have gone straight to something else."



POLANSKI HALF SEAS UNDER: a potshot for the cover of French *Vogue*, never used

D HIGH WATER

Might it not have been better to go back to the small, intimate pictures he once made? "I would go back to the simple movies with no pretension," says Polanski, "but even simple movies aren't simple any more. Technology has developed; the audience demands much more. You have to be plausible; there are no easy movies. Still, if I could find the right subject for a small, suspense picture, I would be the happiest director of all."

Last time Polanski was in Cannes, six years ago, he had been dragged there to promote *Fren*. The press conference turned into a fiasco — a sort of vicious games between sensation-hungry media eager for the lowdown on the scandal which had made Polanski a sex offender in the States, and critics gunning for a director whose commercial career then wavered, at the same, serious doubt. He was prepared to discuss the movie, but certainly not his private life.

Nor was it just the press he had begun to have enough of. "I was disgusted with all the so-called creative script meetings with the various studio executives," he says. "I was sick of lawyers, agents and stockbrokers. I really thought this is not what I want to do with my life."

So, he went back to the stage, to direct the French production of *Amadeus*, in which he also played the role of Mozart. In this, he found complete satisfaction, feeling no urge to get back behind a camera. Then, an Israeli producer, Amos Michan, offered to pick up *Polanski*, and Polanski couldn't resist the temptation. He went to Israel, checked costs and locations, but finally to no avail. Michan couldn't put together the necessary budget (\$1500 million). Polanski was just about to give up altogether, when Tunisian producer Tarek Ben Ammar intervened.

Was this a reason to rejoice? In retrospect, Polanski isn't too sure. "When the picture on which we shot the movie arrived in Cannes" — it was one of the features of this

year's festival — "everyone was very impressed and expected me to share their feelings. But, frankly, what I felt was nausea. I'd seen the damn thing for months on end, from every side. I didn't want to see this any more."

In any case, shooting on water isn't his cup of tea; 24 years ago, he put three people on a small boat in Poland, and the result was *Kruly in the Water*, the film which made his reputation. Now, after sailing again, he says he should have known better. "It was very hard then, and it was much, much harder now. To make this film was just hell, like signing my own death

warrant. Everything is somehow against you when you shoot on a boat, on water. To do it with costumes, special effects, fights and people on top of everything is really crazy."

"Also, shooting the movie in Tunisia with a crew almost as international as the UN was like trying to run the Tower of Babel. I speak many languages, but so get certain notions in my crew was quite often both time-consuming and exhausting. I had to repeat myself five or six times in different languages, and people were looking at me and laughing."

Not to mention the streak of bad



POLANSKI ON THE HIGH SEAS: calling a dash in *Polanski*

< POLANSKI

luck that plagued the production all along. They knew they had to worry about Walter Matthau's health; they suspected the polio might create problems. "But bad luck never strikes where you expect it to," says Polanski. "One actor died of a stroke while visiting the islands with his wife. Our assistant broke his back falling from a boat. I hurt my back and couldn't move for a couple of weeks. You name it, we had it." Which means that it took nine months to shoot the film in weather that, typically, "was the worst for 30 years!"

Polanski's *Protest* is certainly unexpected. To get from this most sardonic of aesthetes a smashbox-selling kid's adventure is genuinely amazing. He has put Walter Matthau in a cage—a later version of Wallace Herry in his prime. He has fitted him with a whole set of wooden legs and made him the most appealing villain to seal the seas since Long John Silver. And the director also wallows in the portrayal of proteanque Castilian squirts so evil they become funny.

But *Protest* is not an entirely new picture. If you look carefully, you will find an image of a world in which everything, from religion to morals to wisdom, is scorned. The only solid, reliable value is gold. Nor is there any chance that Walter Matthau will challenge Erol Flynn's reputation with a sword, or Bart Lancaster's dexterity in climbing masts. And Polanski isn't about to replace Michael Curtiz or Jacques Tourneur as the master of the light, period, action movie. But, for audiences for whom these names won't mean much, the movie ought to work quite well, judging by the Cannes reception, where the picture was better liked by the public than the professionals.

One of the very few directors the public easily identifies, even when they do not go to see his movies, Polanski is less than happy with his doubtful celebrity, feeling he owes it to the tragic murder of his wife, Sharon Tate, by the Manson gang. The fact that, shortly before that happened, he had just finished *Rosemary's Baby*, which showed Susan being born in New York, and that, soon after his personal tragedy, he directed *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (aka *Dance of the Vampires*), about a professor and his assistant (played by Polanski himself) chasing the evil creatures of the night, linked his private life for ever with his screen work, to the point that one was used as a reference for the other.



OUT!—the director's famous cameo from *Chinatown*

"It was a silly thing for the press to do at the time," he says now, "and it keeps pursuing me to this day. The fact is that, here I am, sitting with you and allegedly talking about *Protest*, and yet we are dragging my private life in once more. I think the American media were relieved when I had my troubles with justice there. After the murder of Sharon Tate, they had a guilt feeling. Now, they are rid of it: the victim has become the culprit."

After promoting *Protest* in Cannes, Polanski's next project took him back to Paris, to start

work with Gérard Brach on a thriller that will be shot in France. For next year, he has already committed himself to direct another stage production of another Peter Shaffer play, *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*. Top French actor Claude Brasseur will play the Spanish conquistador, Pizarro, trampling the Inca civilization of Peru under his feet. But Polanski has, so yet, no one in mind for the part of the King of the Incas. Maybe he will play it himself. In which case, he is sure to be asked a familiar question. "Mr Polanski, why did you choose to depart from your traditional image?"



ODD COUPLE: Walter Matthau as Captain Red, Faye Dunaway as the Frog



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SYDNEY HARBOUR & WEREWOLF Ingeborg Annandley and Philippe Mork

THE MARSUPIALS — THE HOWLING III

The final act of the shoot for *The Marsupials*. Filming of two pages proved three conditions on it, which gave a fair idea of the production of its writer/director/producer Philippe Mork.

The last is from Salvador Dalí: "In truth, it goes 'the imagination of the Hollywood experts will be the only thing that will ever limit our ambition'." The second rather

stirred at from George Lucas: "Don't be too cute. The end — a philosophical rumination from Corinne's last aim — is a lot straighter. How does one tell her I wonder? How do you shoot a spider through the first slash of its special field that it try to escape from?"

The *Marsupials* is a comedy horror movie, it doesn't go all in modern-day Sydney. But the end is playing a straight "Absolutely not creepy," says Mork. And that it started off as a werewolf plot. "The werewolf part of it really came last," he says. "I wanted to do a film about marsupial people because every creature has a marsupial counterpart (even dogs rats). The idea struck. Timmerman will take the Tarzanish tiger and the Tarzanish human will be a werewolf. I'll treat the whole thing one day further and turned the Tarzanish women into werewolves. That means they're marsupial werewolves."

Jarboe, the film's central character, leaves her role of marsupial werewolves in the suburbs and comes a last moment to the city. There, she is spotted by Doty

spinner — during their first love scene, when he discovers her secret.

Jarboe is played by Ingeborg Annandley, the girl discovery of *Playing Possum* (she played *Adagio*). Now seventeen and with a year of commercials and modelling (which has [including the Miss World 1986 contest]) she is her first adult role, and she is understandably excited that, as an Ingeborg has become 18-19.

The night before she did her first interviewative scene, she went to a cinema to make up excited that Ingeborg should have to have green eyes — it was placed across her entire eyeball — and she was philosophical about it. "I couldn't even feel it. I just knew it was there because I couldn't feel it."

The *Marsupials*, according to GPR, Los Angeles, is fairly straightforward by comparison with his last film for Mork. *Death of a Spider* with its muted colour and film noir feel. One thing he is particularly proud of, though, is the late arrival footage, especially that in 1986. Korda had told him there was a three-month wait for film black and white stock. So he has ended up using a five-gate print stock which was never intended for shooting, and this varied the frame-edges between 20 and 20 1/2 to get the pulse effect of a hand-cranked camera.

The middle of the shoot (*Week Three*, Day Two) is on location at Dover's Point, right under the Harbour Bridge (with a train every minute and a half) and is drawing some curiosity from the thousands of tourists who pass by almost as often as the train. The coach film run by Ted Fogg of Morkette is getting some pretty near publicity.

Over lunch, which ends with a loud, raucous pouting of which McDermott would have been proud, the rest of the cast praised their scene. Dasha Blinnova (who got a *Perigee* the previous weekend to *Disaster* Penelope) and Barry Otto are pleased through Otto is not a werewolf. "After Penelope is more concerned with the warring of the Melbourne Cup. Ralph Capelin in Melbourne sunglasses is the best. A pity because he plays a non-marsupial detective."

Each (Blinn) wanted to do on a cheap horror movie called *The Shaggy Dilemma*. He persons her and they talk in love. And (Blinn) I've got a surprise — We've got some big fights in this," says Mork. But no



WINTER AND THE GOAT: Philip Van der Biele and Dasha Blinnova, and yes, the one in this role is a werewolf



FOR LOWE ALONE: Miss Penelope and Ingeborg Annandley



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Baker later says that author Paul Theroux told him to take the boat onto Coast early and make it all his own.

Given such a history of action against those on the fringes of society, it is not surprising that the country's social services are riddled with racism and self-serving. It is more remarkable that the agencies responsible for caring for the poor, the disabled and other disadvantaged minorities in New Brunswick have been able to do so without a hint of racism. *A Life in Four Chapters* tells the twenty-year history of these social services for the most disadvantaged. Little criticism, however, and little discussion of the racism that has

The *Montezuma* Coast is about the Pacific's modern American Southwest. Family Robinson wrote jungle style, turns acutely ironic. Father Alton Harrison Ford in his pastoral life (role for Peter Weller) is an unrepentant, an imperialist with questionable blood speculations and has to learn to be more acutely aware of the world's value. The novel is about the journey of America's idealistic to turn. An exponent is likely convinced of the ecological of his own view and content of action. After years, semi-idealized the wisdom of taking his wife and her children to the wilderness of central America. There is to set up a little paradise on earth (20th century translated of the 19th century Australia).

They also didn't know what to expect from the war and didn't realize how far they had to go. We and our soldiers were highly intelligent and by no means stupid," says the retired Major (played by Hugh Marlowe) regarding the trip, and the film is in complete accordance and approval. The role 13-year-old Charlie Sheen (Playing younger John Lennon) played and redressed a girl who was sent here. Her mother (played by Mary McCormack) says that she is in the matter and that the boys sent at the end of the film is to be there. A happy ending. The film is reported by all and respective to their father's fate. Interestingly, many states. There comes a turning point — either to show that the government or control itself — he tells them that the US has been captured in a nuclear war. The boys don't quite buy it. The father then tells them that the situation has been fixed.

[illegible]

Somewhere else turns out to be the Mosquito Coast, an area of savannah-edged jungle on the Caribbean. A former British protectorate it now stretches across both Honduras and Nicaragua, but we never learn if this is the land which countryman Pan Am pilot Juan Pablo Hodelin says "isn't there." The story obviously predates the Saramblita military in Nicaragua and the ongoing war against the Honduras-based US-backed *Contra* forces.

In his review of these books, the *Old Renaissance Express* theorizes that the Missouri County looks like a portrait setting for the story of colonial wars. And in effect (this is what the Fosses become) The massachusetts Indians then upon a wild storm that strikes them violently without stages to limited their little room in his own creative stage. For a time, he succumbed to the temptation of the story and is making out in a poem about the strands out of the jungle like a latter day Tolstoy or a long-line version of the 20th century. Then real and effect Allen has regard with endless resources, skill and energy rebounds on their when united characters who may be themselves but are probably simply historical. The reference upon the Fosses is very relevant.

Things then go from bad to worse as *disaster*. These self-interest destroyed the family parties as a Communist show the self-supporting (unhappy) and (by the time) every one but the self-destructive and even the has retreated the a moral burden that respects virtually every thing but his own values and delusion. (Gloria again drive them up and into the mountains for months. The strongly plating necessary (Reverend Southern) Island is

Garrett Miller looks like André Gregory, the headliner of Laura Miller's NYC Group (with Robert

[illegible][illegible]

using the building of the temple (1st century AD).

[illegible]

As an official designer of photography John Szabo doesn't let it all seem too capable as Russell Boyd is capturing the imaginative elements in Allen's vision. John Goodale, a production designer in jungle beach local but not so local, serves the designer equally well. And Maurice Jarré stands as his more modest presence in line of an evocative of less haunting, more full stop. Underlines the film's, essentially, cinematic, aesthetic flow.

Chen's work is fun for Wei as he brings up a character and a bit of fantasy. The fact is that the fantasy is in the method — what this family of modern, jet-settle players achieves in a simple and an elegant, fantastic enough. The slight fantastical tone is somehow reinforced by the unlikely characters of this treatment. That's why the decision to do the novel that the story is based on real life but the details of the Pei family adventure seem to say the least. The novel's plot steps to ensure are unrefined by facts and the decision to jump the space and time is a bit of a surprise. The novel's ending is a bit of a surprise. The novel's ending is a bit of a surprise. The novel's ending is a bit of a surprise.

The Mosquito Coast isn't a message film, but there are two lessons it's delivered. *Howards* demands the most obvious one is a quite limited rejection of the consumer society. The other is that the American Dream's most beloved adage — you can be anything you really want to be — is true after a fashion, but life and its forces — natural and natural thing us all to account

Table 1



Their 100% whole grain, 100% natural, 100% delicious food is The Monocro Company's secret to success.

[illegible]



OUTBACK Jack Thomson and Lulu find romance in *The Last Frontier* (above). **BACKING OFF** Rick Hoskins, Michael Caine and Cathy Tyson in *Mind Laid* (prev. pg.) **BUCKING OUT** Hoskins and Tyson best it (below right)



and then only as a minor traffic hazard.

But if the clocks are missing, so is everything else as far as national characteristics are concerned. Town might as well have whistled Rite off to some early settlement on the moon. And since the newspapers are read by 80 million people, the US press must now be nearly five times the population of Australia, who believe the continent to be almost entirely empty.

The Aussie concocted for US consumption in *The Last Frontier* is a sleepy southwestern desertland in which rainfall and water can be disregarded whenever reduced to bleak realities by even slosher situations. And there is no time that cannot be wasted by driving long distances while staring intently at the windscreen. Indeed the people in *The Last Frontier* drive and fly around as much as would have made more sense to drill for oil, not water, on the parched homestead.

The *Last Frontier* really pinches at credibility when Kate affluently tells her old driver to do what he thinks best with the cattle simply taken off for a couple of days in the Alice Springs camel race in a back stamp, which they engage in the sheep and cattle — a scenario which turns out to be about as deadly as *Apocalypse Now*.

I have read enough theoretical works on narrative structure to know the romance is the main (if not the only) motivation for a popular fiction, but I've rarely seen it so crudely demonstrated. In the 11th shot the male problems disappear from under the female film's purview, down the back end of a dead horse while the cattle continuously lie freely as meat. But back and forth she wanders on a heliopod — in an early draft it was apparently *Apocalypse Now*, but the new owners (very sensibly) wouldn't agree — in an appalling error.

The hell with the good in other words, go for the hide-out. Derek Harrison says I (the critic) big it up (big dog). *The Last Frontier* is bad cinema, bad television and a bad omen for the future. It is also a bloody-murder picture of Australia, if writing the continent were that easy. The correct sentence would have been to stay at home.

Nick Redcliffe

The Last Frontier Directed by Simon White. Produced by Les Perkins. Screenplay by Les Perkins. Associate producer David Harrison. Storyline by Michael Lussman. Director of photography Ian Baker. Production designer Peter Meyer. Music by Alan May. Editor Tony Peterson. Sound recorder: Don Kennedy. Cast: Linda Hamilton, Rick Hoskins, Jack Thompson, Nicky Katt, Greg Kinnear, Ed Gernsey, Tony Bonner, Tom Atkins, Judy Wilson, Meg Stanning, Deborah Canning, Tim Rothwell, Peter Bergin, Billy Alderson, Jack Chisholm, Tim Heppner, Abby Hoffman, Peter Hawkes, Tim Laverie, Phoebe Don. Production company: Skyline & McGlow. Post production: Skyline & McGlow. Released October 20, 1990. 120min. 2.35mm color. Australia: 1990.

MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDRETTE

Given that the English are thought to mock the wastering of their food as if it had to exploit the importance of the laundrette in modern Latin society. But with space and sunlight was enough to make our Hells Home way of life seem dissipated like laundrette even in Margaret Thatcher's low indigenous dream: perhaps it is as much as before as it ever was. Many still share those in the wilderness corner and perhaps to be saved by the one who.

This is the assumption in Hiral Raman's moving sculpture for Stephen Flowers' film *My Immigrant Laureate* — originally made in 1989 for the Chelsea Four and blown up to 35mm for cinema distribution following its success at last year's Edinburgh Film Festival. The film uses the story of a young Pakistani boy Gino's success with his first business, a kioskette to transport many sales in the new post multi-cultural society of Britain.

[illegible]

Other free but one side, then another. He chills in an pig while Ingrid Johnson (Dine of My Living) stuck in the mud of unemployment and questions to help live with the painful experience. Traditional roles are reversed as black ethnopsychiatry helps patients as well better than white people. It is not just understanding and friendship which really makes the two fall in love.

The key metaphor of cleaning remains intact throughout the film. It is not an equation of cleanliness with Whiteness, although that is touched on through Johnny's earlier involvement in National Front marches. And in the end it is water that the two boys splash over each other — a playful but potent symbol of the message of tolerance. Suggestive of the film possibilities open to any race, class and society.

Stephen Frears (left, directed two features: *Quentin* (1971) and *The Hit* (1974)) but is also well known for his television work: he is one of a number of now British directors backed by the provincial networks and in recent years by Channel Four, who are now largely a mainstreamed revival of the British film

At the same time, study of the writers involved in the revival — for example, David Hare, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill — also came from writers' space classes. They learned



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among other things about what Brexit tells us about where we stand. There's not only that, but also about some kind of social significance, an identity, even a sense of the value of an Apple, can be regarded as its entire political.

These writers have questions mostly from the British television industry who understand the right word realism if they are deploying it as a style. It is a language deal for the low budget film *Flow*—real life is the subject or whatever conditions it might be found. But unlike many of Aspinall's interviews in this field, a digressing of surface detail is not the objective here.

The surface is used as the story of Orma and his journey to yet another story of more stories. Each image, each word leads the eye along, through history and the real

For all this, too much of a burden should not be placed on city govern-

but Laurenceau — above all a charming, generous, modest musician — is one of those artists which irresistibly attract a crowd of the like kind.

It certainly has in Britain. The latest Levi jeans advertisement on television is set in a laundrette, with star in turn-of-the-century lad who slings off his BTJs and releases into a shower in his quest to enjoy the sight of his pants sagging around in the class-leaving water.

Who's My Bowdler? Laureates makes sense in our land of coalitions: it is a *corpus*. One only hopes that word of mouth does not send in too many of the buffy with false or unfathomably high expectations. There's some fabulous steering especially in the light scenes, always the young ones leading the girl and then with a dramatic nod in gesture without loss re-union of the best very different older brothers. There's a reliable performance especially

from Daniel Craig Lewis as rough, dis-
moral Johnny, and Susan Jeffers
as cardboard Susan here. This and
more (at least) must be remembered
in a film made in Britain for
1980 CMO.

Abstract

[illegible]

THE CHALLENGE

The Challenge wrote stuff that stings as much as against massive odds is a bunch of Aussie tennis triumph over the stoic powerful Americans. Only two other sporting legends have shared national pride like the American Cup. Phil Laid and Les Garry. All have had one something common: the Yanks did the dirty on us. But only in this picture race did we actually win.

The victory of Australia II in 1982 has become one of those events which is etched in all memories. After all, how could anyone forget Bob Hawke's message to employees that night: each anyone who takes a sickie the next day and you're a cunt? The national hang over became sanctified.

It wasn't that the country had gone wild over twelve male yachting icons (yachts are ridiculously boring), but, for we (stupid) the 132 million Aussies, victory. If we could do that, we the country could do anything. And it is this theme of national achievement that underpins The Challenge.

Produced by Greg Coole, Matt Carroll and Little Agent (of Mister and Missee fame), The Challenge

portrays the events leading up to the victory of Australia II over Dennis Corbett's boat. Victory And despite some weaknesses, it is a strong and entertaining story well written (by David Phillips) and directed (by Greg Thomson) and with some really good performances.

Unlike other multiple night rip-offs, The Challenge is well being or loaded with exciting, mainly because the decision not to have been made to focus on the challenge and the politics, not the yachting. The sports sequences are suitably low and do well placed between the action on land.

The drama of course begins with future Newport 1982 and also depicts syndicate that set for the fourth time Skipper John Bertrand (John Deacon) and designer Ben Loxton (John Cleese) both decide to call it quits. The best ten years of my life spent being fast, successful, however, refused to let them accept defeat and commit most of the time two hours pushing them to take up the challenge again. Very quickly therefore, he becomes the driver for the story — his victory, but it's about Aussie two, who embodies the message that is currently being sung in tough times: you go to go for it, to fight for success. (Bob a vision inspires them all.) Bob Hawke

and Paul Keating should be as lucky.

The early tension between the two is the most interesting and the most interesting between them, the full of energy and fun. Loxton with winning John Wood's boat is shown to be being generous, devout, positive, a bit slow and it's almost inevitable. Bertrand is portrayed as a dedicated and brilliant skipper who offers himself to suffer in self pity where he makes a tactical error and who (despite his self pity) eventually he lost to him.

But it is John Cleese as Loxton who is the star of the show with his display of lovable cynicism. And of course it was Loxton who designed the winged keel — the set a genius, which leads to his death in the drama. Convinced that the boat is going to win and take the Cup easily from them, the New York Yacht Club represented mostly by Ray Barrett and Gus Marcano (at about) refused to have the keel disallowed.

The NYCC cheerleaders are not driven as deeply as the Australians. They're one dimensional, constantly seen to be doing less id, often under a constant pressure to perform strategies in their comfort boat room. They are simply everything the Aussies are not, powerful through years of victory, energetic

and fast sports when being.

The other challenge got lost of a look in the soundtrack goes televisual when the talent run past the French boat. Berrett, Russell, and even the Englishman Philip De Silva (Tim Pigott-Smith) who smokes huge cigars and drinks pilsners of champagne. This much chance to register. But Loxton also embodies British life, a good sport when he loses, he jumps into the water to celebrate with the victorious Aussies — which of course makes The Challenge something of a party since the film really got it wrong, never in it members.

Under the real sign of New York Yacht Club, Dennis Corbett (playable Hammond) is a well rounded and interesting character. Obsessed with the Australians, he is desperate to maintain his reputation as the best. Before the interview, he is desperate incident (where Corbett miraculously down a hill) towards the Australian today, there is a fascinating scene with Loxton. Am I the best? he asks. When Loxton replies, that he is not saying Corbett says. Well, say I tell me I'm the best!

There is also a subtle irony and justice. Phil Corbett is a drinker in the house with Loxton, he is doing in champagne of beer and when he's out on the water, he is usually painting a Buckle up. The Aussie fans of a few whiskies of drinking too, but the point is firmly made that under their manager William Jones (in good performance by Richard Egan) victory can only be achieved through rigorous discipline. Early to bed and go to sleep to exercise. The relationship of the team is based on the spirit of companionship and a very devotion to authority. Like the battles of tennis, success and the fact of victory on the dining room table, these qualities are perceived to be uniquely Australian.

The Challenge is in fact a celebration of all things Australian to quote Paul Hogan, it is a longed for show. Under Hogan's Pen, however, there is a discernible seriousness about it because we approach it with the purpose of knowing the outcome. The main drama the Aussie can't, the movie adaptable — and the reader — it is a to watch.

Tony Casanough



The Challenge Directed by David Thomson. Produced by Coole, Carroll and Thomson. Music by Greg Coole. Matt Carroll and Little Agent. Executive in charge of production: Henry Manners. Screenplay: David Phillips. Director of photography: Russell Boyd. Production designer: Larry Shanderson. Music: Martin Armiger. Sound recorder: Mike Latta. Editor: Geoffrey Packer. Cost: John Woodhouse (Berrett), John Deacon (Phil Barrett), John Deacon (Ben Loxton), Barry Robinson (John Cleese), Richard Mills (William Jones), Christine Burke (Susan Jones), Jacqui Weaver (Peggy Corbett), Lisa Maguire (Paul De Silva), David Nicholas (Hammond), Gailina (Gailina), Ray Barrett (Bob McCulloch), Gus Marcano (The Marcano), Production company: Golden Dolphin in association with Newhouse, Coole and Carroll. First broadcast: 11/11/82. 13/12/82. October 1982. 11/11/82. 13/12/82. 11/11/82. 13/12/82. 11/11/82. 13/12/82.

Why Santa and Prince didn't

In a recent issue of *Sight & Sound* Jonathan Rosenbaum decried some very perceptive remarks about how our conception of the cinema in the old sense is changing, or has changed with the advent of new institutions and new technology, particularly with cable TV and video. Not the least perceptive remark concerns the way this new technology offers, or could offer, a healthy access to what Rosenbaum calls "difficult" films, directly and without interference, given the condition of private viewing. By inference, Rosenbaum means the power of cultural sublation held by mainstream press critics.

The signs are evident in this country as well: Godard's *Cool World*, Fassbinder's *Querelle*, Elaine May's *Milky and Ricky*, Fuller's *Dead Pigeon on Beethoven Street*—among others—have been available on video for some time, where their theatrical release has either been limited, or nonexistent. SRS offers something of the same service and although I can't cable, it is still something. But where Rosenbaum's remarks hold good for "difficult" films, in this country his remarks also apply to a good number of films that we would not normally call "difficult" yet which suffer the same fate theatrically as those mentioned above. At your local video outlet, however, these same films should appear next to a *Rocky IV* or a *Crocodile Dundee*. And although they

wouldn't be listed out as much as *Rocky* or *Dundee*, they are at least visible and available; video can be repeated, and are becoming increasingly easier and cheaper to buy.

This piece is about films that are released directly—or at least directly—onto video. There are a number of reasons for this, and not all aim to do with the status of mainstream press critics in Australia. But they are a part of it, given that they perform something of a service to the general public, and especially since a tradition has formed where a film is either given generous space when it is not "necessary"—i.e., there are films that will find their audience with or without the help of mainstream critics—or passed outright. The latter response could put the film out of theatrical release prematurely.

But a more realistic determinant would seem to be how well films do theatrically overseas. If a film does not stir much enthusiasm at the box office, it's more than likely that it will reach this country in cassette form. This is the case with Prince's directing debut *Under The Cherry Moon*. Yet *For Men's Big Adventure*, a film which did remarkably well in the US, went straight to video in Australia. Probably in anticipation that mainstream critics would make a shambles of it, and that Australian audiences probably wouldn't warm to the film's gimmicky, cartoonish

humour. Ironically, *For Men's Big Adventure* on video has already gathered something of a cult following by word of mouth.

Another consideration would be the distributors' tailored knowledge of what traditionally will or will not work theatrically in the Australian market. With the exception of *A Woman Under the Influence*, John Cassavetes has consistently been box office poison in Australia, and despite his latest *Big Trouble* maintaining somewhat from the disengaged subtextualism that has marked his previous films, it too has gone directly to video.

Still another consideration is that of bad publicity. This has affected two recent films in particular: Godard's *Heat* Mary and the Christmas almanac *Silent Night, Deadly Night*. *Heat Mary's* bad publicity, for instance, has led the Australian distributor to leave it on the shelf. Ironically, it is said that cinema management had a hand in organizing protestors at the film's screenings at London's Metro Theatre. On video *Heat Mary's* reaching a more general audience than it normally would, given that it is one of those "difficult" films. Bad publicity has definitely helped the film along to get into video outlets and when the negative sting of bad publicity has been soothed away, then *Heat Mary's* breathes a lot easier on the shelf at the video outlet, introduced by promoters. But this is not always the case. It is not so for *Silent Night, Deadly Night*. Bad publicity has followed it from film to video. The video has already been banned in Queensland, and OK, that's Queensland, but when newspaper reviews run headlines like, "Psycho Santa video could send children for life then things get scary. Nonetheless, the point is that on the whole, all of these films have inevitably found their way to video and here they will enjoy an unimpeded triumph.

This piece is also supposed to be talking at some length about two films in particular: *Under the Cherry Moon* (Warner) and *Silent Night, Deadly Night* (Polygram), and in writing a few lines about these films one could say I am being Rosenbaum's "interference." But writing for *Cinema Papers* or *Playhouse*, or even *Playhouse*, given that they are either bi-monthly or quarterly means that one is positioned as a critic. I will repeat, it is not the mainstream but marginal. The activity of the marginal critic is not a matter of tagging one. Two or three stars next to a film title, expressing a perfunctory relation of power over public taste, but it reflects a desire—to put it simply, although desire is not anything simple—to talk about film. That is to say, to talk about one's conception of film in a general sense, and where this includes films in particular.

Adrian Martin writes in a manner that I would call journalistic, but still engages



CAREFUL WITH THAT AXE. SANTA: A tender moment from *Silent Night, Deadly Night*.

make it onto the big screen

in what I call marginal enjoyment rather than journalism. Here one is not tied to a stringent time, or space factor, not limited in one's choice of films and what one can say about them, and not constrained by a highly coded way of writing. It was in this collective dream of marginal criticism which was 39TH ANN. FILM CRITICISM SHOW that he delivered a passionate diatribe of *Secret Admirer* despite the fact that everyone present in the studio knew the film again. I last longer than two more days on the screen. It serves to guide taste is a question here, then it is as a consequence, not a condition.

I have to admit that although I may deplore the status of mainstream critics, the conditions of the Australian film market, and the scarcity of bad publicity, I do not deplore the situation of films to video. I, for one, prefer the larger screen to the smaller screen, but video, and the changes it has brought, are with us and will stay for some time. Video is offering us something but not telling us, and this is being lost on those of us who want to talk about films. It criticizes in the marginal sense that I have briefly described, but not take account of video. Then there are consequences for talking about films, and for our conception of the cinema today. With video technology indeed communications media in general, we do not live in a global village but, as Rosenbaum says, "in a local network of estranged communities" and private viewing results in a kind of closely guarded silent reflection.

As a marginal critic, it is important to me said to others that our only access to *Cassavetes*: *Big Trouble* is through video. But it is more important still, that it is through video that we could talk about *Big Trouble*'s very successful sophistication, and that upon reflection here this puts in focus the way *A Woman Under the Influence* and *Minnam* and *Moskowitz* could a somewhat sensibly skin to, but very much off center from, their own screen.

Under *The Cherry Moon* similarly takes themes of sexual comedy, along the lines of Lubitsch's *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* or *Sturgeon's The Lady Eve*, but it is a love story with Prince significantly taking the role of the female gold digger. The film also negotiates with thirties music, but where the musical and dance performances express the destiny of the couple toward compatibility — as in a way they do so in *Purple Rain* — their marital use in *Under The Cherry Moon* tend to express an incompatibility of values and forces that will eventually separate the couple. (Prince's technical dynamism in performance is not a concern of this film, but a mental ease with reverence and homoeroticism still is.) It is significant that *Under The Cherry Moon* reveals the thirties musical and musical figure as a tragic figure

It is our small way we wish to engage in the debate over something like *Secret Night*. *Secret Night*, video offers us that opportunity, but if video isn't accepted into critical undertakings, then that kind of engagement is short circuited. *Secret Night*, *Secret Night* has been singled out for the possible harmful effects of allowing children to see Santa riding to the Christmas campaign. I remember as a kid being scared for my life at the image of Dandy Ernest on television, yet I do not believe I've grown up with any abnormal fears. I must admit, however, that *Secret Night*, *Secret Night* is a bad film, not a really bad, but a cheap, bad, an "average" bad, the kind of bad where psychosis is triggered by a musical drama of "punish" "punish" each time Santa ho-ho-ho a lie tale into a victim. And this badness has consequences for how the film is perceived. But despite its badness, *Secret Night*, *Secret Night* reveals some wisdom about how our culture may represent the way children could actually perceive Santa as something fearful. The image of a mother dragging her sobbing child over to sit on Santa's knee is something the film wishes to give that double edge to the figure of Santa Claus.

This piece is also about a place. That such journals as the *Monthly Film Bulletin* and *American Film* incorporate video is a good sign, but these are overseas publications, and although

they differ to degrees, both incorporate video as a form of guide somewhere at the back of the journal. It is in this that video can be seen to be taken as film's critical offspring. That our own film journals do not incorporate video is indicative of this view as well, but in separating film and video, except in instances of let in music video, there is an impoverishment of film criticism and this is indicative of our journals taking a particular path which it seems to me to be toward journalism.

We do not need some new video magazine, this would merely enhance the separation since that we already have. It is a question of journals like *Cinema Papers*, or *Filmworks*, and even *Filmweek*, journals that offer a incorporating video. *Gilbert*, we are not really contemporary with what the cinema is today, or could possibly be. It is a matter of the publications we already have re-evaluating their commitment to what video technology is offering critically and culturally, the difficult, as well as the not so difficult.

When Rosenbaum writes that something is in the process of ending, but by the same token something is in the process of beginning, I want to know what this beginning is. And video is one way toward it.

Ruthless Caputo



JUST A BIRD: Prince in *Under the Cherry Moon*

like this one live in quiet, rural towns as when Jessica and Mrs. Hartley first met Laura, and when Mrs. Hartley is designed to find that she and Laura are the same delicate beauty.

There is an especially odd subtext about the value of obscenity dating back 100 years to the Japanese photographer, Onuma and John's obsession with it as a perfect form (the scenes of him roasting and consuming her they figure are totally suppressed). This is clearly designed to satisfy those with a morbid hunger for something a little weird, but not so big to make any real head like they're roasting out of control.

Sigourney Weaver in her first full comedy role, as a real eye opener: dangerous, cool, humorous and sensually playful lady that thanksgiving has a lot of respect and a difference that allows her to be more-pulsive without a hint of malice. And she's a real one. **Flawless**

Table 1

Expand Film Lines: The Ball Park also did this film. Actor Francis got **Colored Blues** (Hochstetler) which did have some a splendid film. Not even the beautiful setting of Oxford University can gloss over the magnitude of it even just the script.

He plays in gentlemanly golf American teenagers who happens to now well seduced an older woman at Las Vegas and through he wins enough money to go to California he can meet his dream girl an English princess. He gets his prophetic dream through but does he stay with her forever?

The fact that Oxford Glass was made in 1983 and not released until 1988 suggests that the distributors had doubts about the toy design. It was a mistake.

For someone with so many top-line appearances behind him (*The Godfather*, *The Mirror*, *New York Times*), he hasn't learned much. How tentative up to his Bad People stage was that play the role of an alternative teenager who is beating out his

Except for the engaging performance of Ally Sheedy in the role of American girl with whom Lowe wants to be just friends, this film has little to recommend it. Robert Reed as his first feature film as director gives a dull, uninteresting, and boring performance. But very boring.

Table 1

It is particularly easy to spot today's version of a B-grade movie. Leaving three commercial opportunities aside, they do usually do the one that makes for some interesting mistakes: they're expert at padding and distorting the elements of their tale that have impinged on the minds of today's audience.

Redemptive Drama (Rice) shows it one such film. It begins with a title style with (old) music motifs on brass. It uses the same over details of *Black Mirror*. And it closes the deal with the whole aspect of Charles Sanders Peirce.

The above findings on life course suggest

but quickly comes over to 3010 when the two lead characters finally break out of the marine shell, where they have survived on a steady diet of tortoiseshell, detective novels, Redstone, Greasers at lunch, and tanka poems from the radio. In the end, the two leads are called Phil and Marjorie. These negative labels are ironic in that Phil is a mother and Marjorie is a father. The two are contrasted with a Miss Archer and a Chap, among others. Sometimes the dystopian words of Philip K. Dick (Foster's past) do not seem to carry much weight.

Phil and Marlene, belonging to two factions, are introduced in a gangland war over the quest for a set of keys which can activate the only remaining nuclear missile. The school keeps coming to the fore as George tells out its gangster life, growing sales figures are revealed about boys and mothers.

The deep boys are the best: ten-year-old versions of John Travolta, breathtaking Magnums and sporting lines like, "Show the fucking bitch away." But take away the guns and they are reduced to shrill, little kids who have been denied the real thing.

Add to these kinds of school elements a fantastic guard stinky doglike behavior that barks out of the city streets and giggles up the two leads and you forget to see what a true joy is in *Radioactive Dreams* (reels by buying nuclear war coated environmental matters). I guess it can equally apply to some of today's *Shoguns*.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of study population

All four parts of Peter Jackson's 1980 film **Footenaghty** (aired 1/27) at the end of a chase sequence, there's a cut and the camera moves on, expectedly to a sign on top of a building. It reads: Jesus Saves. Now I know that sign. I know where it comes from and it definitely is quite old. All you have to do is think back to 1937, which isn't that long ago, because Channel 10 rebroadcast 1937 all the time in a makeshift format.

Hyman is quoting Garry Henry. Remember the scene on the rooftop with Henry and Chico looking at the church across here from the old fishing Jesus Gave us (after saying "my friends"? It's not the same scene, but it's the same).

So what is a song in *Running Scared*? The Jesus Smith song is not only unexpected, it's not quite right. *Running Scared* is not a love song like it is in the *Baywatch* show. Instead, *Running Scared* is the Super Coppe Cotton Comes to rescue Susan.

The second sheet has an image of the duo (Gregory Hines and Billy Crystal) gone dress-hungry—a yellow car. They look as though they are go-karting (in drag) as I lament for this one too. It's still Super Cop! We still have a black actor and a white actor (going as round the clock twice (40 hours) part of a creative vacation to Ray. What are Beverly Hills Mowgli With Cop!

The game doesn't end there. Almost 500,000 people have signed up to play, and the game is still going strong.

forward quote from last year's Chuck Norris vehicle *Clash of Titans*. Ever heard of a Coltranean recital? It's having your throat cut with your tongue pulled out through the air.

I could say that Hjorts is not really talking references for those of the know, that Running School is being introspective, that it's talking about itself as a poem (if I were anyone other than Hjorts, I would probably believe it).

But Hynes seems to work only by suggestion. Culture? He evades, but he's intelligent. High Noon? There's nothing wrong with approaching as long as you can do something with it. The problem with Hynes is that he knows where he is coming from but never where he is going. The film *Chatterbox* with its version of Margaret Fuller published elegantly laid out what he postulates. 2000 wasn't 2007, but it should have been because it's a novel treated, it was a discordant mess perceived through without the same.

[illegible]

In Saving Grace (JCL) Tom Conti displaying the mounds of quarters which has become his crutch: stick it up! (left) (the Price)

He helped her struggling room mate of the Vatican with his advice, discussing world peace, dogma, faith and finance. Then he meets the silver soccer team. At this stage she knows the film is an inside because they are standing in a circle around the ball.

Shrilly afterwards, Cort tells his friend Cardinal Bardi (Fernando Rey) that he is losing touch with his faith, and soon picks up a way to a small isolated village (depicted in the final sequence) near

[illegible]

SELECTION THE CRUEL



REMARKS: SCARFED ON THE PINE
WOOD CRUZZON



REPRODUCTIVE DIFFERENTIALS



SHAW-WALKER COURTESY: Seven Windows and the First Unitarian

BRITAIN

BY SASKIA BAHON

HEROES AND FILL-INS: Superman and Bond plus the production and

After a bad year for film production in China, seriously highlighted by the fact that P. Bennett and Ivo Kertel from Wanda, contributed their own resources with empty shelves, things are finally looking up on the film making front. According to figures published in the trade paper "Screen International" the number of new films going before the cameras in the first quarter (ending 31 September) was greater than the total for the first and second quarters combined with total investment has more than doubled.

Much of the big money comes from Common's Superfund IV, which uses Christopher Reeve's clapping to find a wallet big enough for the job. *Chatterbox* is for *Johnny*. "I've never felt as close to that people as anything to get by, but I think to write down what's said. The other big spender is the new \$22 million (2.5 million) James Bond film *The Living Daylights* with Timothy Dalton, credited into the role last week by Sean Connery's *Leviathan* and Roger Moore's *Merlin*. In *Glenn*, as the private eye دوبудов provide the fastest bonds.

Production gets more marketing in the independent sector. Stanley Kubrick is ending his Vietnam movie *Full Metal Jacket*, while John Boorman's *Hedge* and *Glory* has come to the end of its shooting schedule.

Art's Choice Inc. film product division of Central Television, Incorporated has sold its latest, its shooting script for the first AIDS program, *Intimate Contact*, to stars Daniel Monaghan as a heterosexual married businessman who falls sick with a prostitute while in New York, and comes home to wife Glenn Close with the latter disease.

Directed by Matthew Hassan, movie producers in recent years for his work on leading bodies like the World of the Environment Fund and First Finance Corporation, promises to be serious if

Terrell is real natural like Fred
mover from last but not Monday's show
on *Alan Cox*. Straight to Hell is a very
low budget spaghetti western that
on Sergio Leone it did sets in Spain
sets just about everyone on the cast
came but Cliff Pugh (see the *Alan
Cox* interview on page 24) written
by Chris Hulse, co-writer of *Angel
Mystic*, it should be fun

Another American adventurer in the screen lands: William Goldring is also in the UK, writing *The Pioneer* (due for Nip Paper of Spent) (a little inspired by wood fires of early rock legends) after triumph from the location of *Hearts of Fire* followed by British director Richard Marquand to the enormous success he had with *Jagged Edges*.

Bob Dylan is the owner of a lone triangle which includes Ruston Project and an actress called Paula. Rustonman gave a stupid daily informative press conference at the beginning of shooting and since then has apparently been hiding his feelings about his health as he gets heavier and put off by people. He has also been spotted buying vast quantities of records from Place Ca. by staff who thought that Dylan

.....

Another interesting casting coup has been Dan Aykroyd's postmodern spin production *Aus*, which boasts the directorial prowess of Robert Altman. Bruce Beresford, Jean-Luc Godard, Derek Jarman, Nicolas Roeg and others. Believe it when you see it.

But British productions which can be seen either before or after the war were magnificently supported, including *My Darling Clementine*, *Seven Years in Tibet* and *Caligula*, which was happily invited to open the London Film Festival on 11 November. And British film which sadly wasn't shown, however, was *Reservoir Dogs*, featured in *Shine*. Joining in July column (*Cinema* Page 58) I said unobtrusively that I find it momentous that its legal problems (*Cynopsis* Page 16) the maiden on whom the film is based, has yet to appear in print. Despite the setback, the festival still displayed plenty of films, including a good selection of new Australian film, among them *Cracker*, *Swamp*, *2 Pounds Deep* and *The Miles Thompson Change* on television.

What the Festival did I have was a single film produced by David Puttnam. His arrival at Columbia Pictures has been washed in the UK with a mixture of envy and anxiety. His reputation as the studio's Rock Royce was met with glee, but there was concern about what he'd do: continue the backing originally promised by Columbia, or the real Rock Revolution.

Meanwhile, Putnam's German predecessor The Mission opened in London with much less, but also a far degree of backlash. The live-action critical metaphor was rejected because the film was not, with the

never being discussed in some countries as responsible for

If the cinema scene in Britain has been fairly quiet of late, seemingly waiting to be wholly consumed by *Clash* (which is currently amusing itself by reviewing all its ABCs), the television world has been a little more busy. The BBC, especially, has been at the forefront of the paper. As *Arthur* it brought to series 6. The talented *Murder* which drama boss a trenchant review during WWI drama under republican attack for left wing bias and dishonest history.

Once the heat calmed down slightly, a new hot broke out: A documentary made by the BBC's Panorama team which portrayed some of the racist slurs night-surgeons in Mrs Thatcher's government. That a Home Office poster was threatened with legal action. Doctors could be taken to court and evidence heard the BBC gave in and paid out £250,000 (\$1.1 million) in damages.

The vinyl screen is giving graffiti artists an other quarters, too. The Great Board of Film Classification (formerly known last September as the Great Board of Film Censors) is picking some new-found wisdom as a result of the Video Rating Act, which makes it impossible simply to banish a film's theatrical distribution to video release. Every thing new has to be re-evaluated for the grounds that children may see things in home they could see in the cinema, and the cost is about \$100. Smaller video distribution men having problems as the independent market shrinks, they're looking for a Christian. For producers, the same under the table, homosexuality is the favorite movie of the decade.



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JAPAN

BY GEORGINA POPE
AND NAOKO YEDAFESTIVE OCCASIONS:
Tokyo goes festival
crazy

As long last it is official: the second Tokyo International Film Festival will be held from 25 September to 4 October next year. During the nine competition seasons, festivals will compete for prizes and three critics' prizes, and new Japanese films will be invited for presentation out of competition. As far as the Young Cinema section of the first TIFF, the New Directors Prize will award prize and silver medals along with a cash prize to directors under the age of 35 selected from fifteen finalists. Five or ten of these prizes will be awarded during the festival.

Several other non-competitive festivals within the festival will also screen around Tokyo. These include a selection of works by Japanese masters, the Kurosawa (Ozu, Kurosawa, Shindo and Oshima) all to be selected by foreign critics. A selection of the works of young Japanese directors will also appear along with an Asian Film Festival series, an International Fantastic Film Festival, a Japanese Women's Festival and 30 films from Around the World.

Although it is noted as such it is not planned TIFF will provide a Pan-Asian Film in a convenient location equipped with multivision video gear to serve as an informal market where buyers and sellers can meet.

Over two thousand Tokyoites turned out to see New Zealand pictures during the recent five day New Zealand Cinema Week. Uta Connors, Nigel Cunningham, Daphne Quatt (Earth) and Leave All For were



FESTIVAL SELECTIONS: Akira Kurosawa Naoko Yeda

screened. As a result of the festival four of the above films are to be released commercially in Japan. Winners in the last 19th Tokyo Cinema Festival, which earned post money totaling US\$2.5 million for the event's most production, have at last received their money. The new projects include Shiro Kurosawa's *Hiroko*, Ozu's (*Shining Years*), Peter Carter's *Five Americas* and Akira Kurosawa's *The Hidden Face*. Kurosawa will win his prize with *Shining Years*. Carter says his current project deals with the physical and mental attraction between an athlete and talented opera singer and a country boy who conquers the city from his remote mountain home-

land in search of work.

Tokyo received a 70 per cent increase in monthly distribution sales for the month of August compared with the same period the previous year. Chieko Matsuyama (*The Silver Stage*), a Fuji Studio Group presentation, accounts for this huge increase, as it screened in cinemas normally showing less on pictures.

Two major releases have begun work this month on new projects. Shiro Kurosawa is making *Edge of Days* (Akira Kurosawa, which stars Eiji Yashima) and is based on the life of the late Kenjiro Tanaka, one of the last film actresses in Japan. The screenplay is based on the biography written by Kuroki

Shido. For Tom Hiroko Oshima is preparing *Solomon's Gamble* (Shiro Kurosawa) with Peter Carter and Shiro Kurosawa in a story of Japan's underworld.

Recent Japanese releases include *Heart* (Shiro Kurosawa), *The Woman Who Went Down* (Shiro Kurosawa) the story of a man involved with two married women played by the real life sisters Mizuki and Chieko Kurosawa. *Shiro Kurosawa* Kurosawa used classical music and lush high speed scenery to tell his passionate tale. But the director's new release *Shiro Kurosawa* (Shiro Kurosawa) and *Kurosawa* (Shiro Kurosawa) seem to have gone to waste.

GERMANY

BY DIETER OSSWALD

ECO SOCKO: filmgoers
pick up the medieval
monastery habit

The success of *The Name of the Rose* was predictable enough. But no-one expected that it would be such a sensation. One million Germans saw the film in its first week, and the number of prints has been doubled to 200 to meet the enormous demand. Many theatres are showing nothing else by night, on and after scheduled

premieres. Have both *Red* and *Black* been a good deal of publicity in all the German media newspapers, magazines, TV and radio all covered extensive reports on the film version of Umberto Eco's bestselling novel.

As most people know by now it is a medieval thriller set in an Italian monastery dealing with unexplained murders, the suppression of knowledge and literature and the inquisition. Jean Jacques Audebert directs Sven Gonsky, if Murray Armstrong and Christian Slater. The producer of the \$35 million film is Bernd Eichinger, producer of the highly successful *Never Ending Story* which took \$100 million worldwide.

Another adaptation of a bestseller has followed in a very different line. This time the German film *Parade* (The Power of Love) an impact love story by bestselling author Marcel Grosse, with popular German TV star Mari-Jürgen Wussow in the lead, ran only a few days. Dore Danz's new film *Parade* (The Power of Love) has been less enthusiastic, only received than his previous work, *Miller (John)* which has been put

up for an Oscar nomination. Muenster is now showing in East Germany, as a *Parade* von Tapes a Rose Luxemburg. East German critics have complained that the film puts too much emphasis on Lustig's private life.

A previous feature at *Parade* and other new German films is the strong trend towards merchandising consumer products with them. German industries — cosmetics, drinks, cars, sports — are being geared more heavily on screen. Some advertising agencies are now specializing in this field and are also engaged in marketing new products into conspicuous positions in TV shows and series.

On the subject of TV public broadcasting organizations and the government, a film promotion agency (*Filmförderungsgesellschaft*) have completed their negotiations on the fourth film and television award. The past project will operate for five years with a budget of \$30.2 million.

In line with the agreement, TV will have a share in the production of cinema film which will also be shown on the small screen two or three years after release in the



PARADE: Reuniting a love triangle

NEW ZEALAND

BY MIKE NICOLAID
HOT TO FOOTROT:
comic strip ready for the
big screen

The release of *New Zealand's* first animated feature, based on the extremely popular comic strip at Murray Ball, could flag the start to a second wave of major filmmaking news.

With production just emerging from last month's post deal is being up on domestic reaction to *Footrot Flats*—A Dog's Tale. A big hit for New Zealand, 20 print Christmas releases begins in mid-December.

To date, it has been a desert for the producers, John Bennett and Pat Cox in the particularly difficult investment climate this side of the Tasman. They raised the entire \$125 million budget from more than 600 investors in less than ten days. New Zealand's largest newspaper group, NZM, which owns both Wellington's *Evening Post* and two of the country's three Sunday papers, and runs the *Ball* film in many of its outlets, has a 20% interest in the project.

Today's basic animation facilities and staff have been used with *Ball* directing proceedings, as frequent meetings from his rural retreat in Gore. *Ball* and screener Tim Brist have the screenplay and one of New Zealand's greatest exports to Australia, John Clarke, is a major voice.

Footrot Flats is expected to have a big print release through a major distributor in Australia, its first before its first international outing at Cannes.

Two other local business on specific issues—Richard Rodd, *Lord's Avenue*, *Pussycat*, and Ian Munn's *Shogun No No*—are among the rounds. *Green City* *Booker*, directed by Bruce Morrison and John Lampa's *Changeling* *Deputies* will be in cinema here during January and February. This quarter is being initiated by the new distributor arm of Auckland producers Larry Pate's *Image Film*. All went out in 1985.

A recent survey undertaken by the New Zealand Film Commission establishes that almost three quarters of the population believe it important for the country to have its



own film industry—an increase from 50% in February 1985. The survey shows that only 14% of New Zealanders had not seen at least one local feature in the past twelve months either in a cinema, on video or on television. Commission Chairman David George says now needs at least three new features to fill early next year. These include two in which the commission has decided to invest its currently "strategic" *Home*, directed by Jan Peasey and produced by Phil and Rosie Dwyer and Leon Keedes's *Aluminium* *Georgy*, produced by Cor Reynolds *Georgy* suite.

Meanwhile two interested parties have been brought into shape: the industry's access to television and the Broadcasting Commission of New Zealand's (BCNZ) dependence on government funds to run the two state government television channels.

The tone is the 510-page report of the Royal Commission Inquiry into Broadcasting and Related Telecommunications. The documents have been months to produce.

Both the Film Commission and the Independent Producers and Directors David devoted time and money to the submissions because of the problems of filmmaking in a country with a small population. They have noted feelings about what the commission has produced.

On the positive side the Royal Commission has recommended introduction of a points system for television which guarantees a minimum New Zealand content on the channels. It says the system should set the local content transmission of 37% for the BCNZ channels (run by Television New Zealand) and 25% for the prospective private channels by the end of 1990. This is five years

after the proposed third channel begins operations.

New Zealand content now constitutes, at best, a highly debatable one-third of total broadcast time with drama, documentaries and coproductions by the independent sector taking up only a very small percent age of this.

The film industry is less happy about the Royal Commission's views on the use of independent production houses by the corporation.

In 1979 BCNZ established a scheme for commissioning independent productions and by mid-1985 had supported 81 projects to a total of \$122 million. In a more recent move, television New Zealand appointed a commissioning editor responsible to Director General John Mowbray to identify and acquire programs out of house.

While the Royal Commission saw problems in a simple position dealing with a single set program—where it did not support industry arguments for making public the acquisition budget from the independent. The *Georgy* investment requested the corporation to commit 5% of TVNZ's net advertising revenue, which would have amounted to over \$127 million in the 1985-86 financial year.

Further, and especially the Royal Commission sounded a note of caution on the balancing of subsidies for program material.

We would be concerned if increased use of the independent sector, especially for drama and documentary production and the construction of the range of programmes, produced in-house whereby television New Zealand production staff were concentrated in local creative production fields.

A major thrust of the Royal Commission's report in fact is what a terms' adequate funding of public

service broadcasting to ensure production of a wide and varied range of programme including New Zealand culture and identity. This brought an instant fight with the government over the level of the television licensing fee (currently internal public broadcasting fee 1).

Just before the report was released the government increased the fee, which had remained static for eleven years, but by no means to the level expected by both the Royal Commission and the BCNZ. The commission believes the fee should be augmented to the average annual subscription price of many city newspapers which would virtually double the new government impact.

BCNZ announced staff and programme cuts particularly in the television area to help bridge what it estimates have to be a \$125-million income shortfall.

The corporation is arguing before the Broadcasting Tribunal that a third television channel would be detrimental to the public interest because BCNZ is not being maintained adequately through the fee. The battle between the government and its broadcasting watchdog seems set to continue for some time.

A bright side for young television viewers, largely uncomprehending the role of the return of the country's most popular music video shows *Plenty To Roll* and *Rocky With Pictures*. Their cancellation follows government over rights to music video clips, the subject of a five-month dispute between video recording companies and Third just reported *Cinema Paces* 24 July 1986). A clarity has surrounded the terms of the settlement. This compressed view of industry sources in the both a disc have compromised with Third's offering internal payment for the clips.



FOOTROT FLATS: Full-length Dog for Christmas season

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winkers through 'Vagabond' ENTHUSIASM Ann Wedgeworth and Jessica Lange

ten and Dora Dörrie (a name but a few) have found their niche in this self-styled 'artistic' festival in the world.

Not that Hol's programming team confined to German films is a whole generation of independence. Like John Huston, John Cassavetes, Brian De Palma, George Romo, David Lynch and Jim Jarmusch have had their German partners from Australia has been represented over the years by the likes of George Miller (Mad Max), Haydn Krimm (Living Dead), and Philippe Mora (The Return of Captain Invincible).

Baddy though on the snowmerry just there was little to celebrate among the 50 films from nine countries. In particular the German entries were notable for their boring content and their lack of kinetic inventiveness. The opening film Josef WSD's *Der erste Mann* was especially disappointing with its tedious dramaturgy and utterly inadequate screenplay — 100 long long minutes about one deadbeat who quits his job, shares human society and creates himself in a military training camp.

Real tactical psycho-anarchy and the symbolism WSD sets out to be in *Neue Achterbahn* but achieves none of the latter's originality. And there were other examples of self-referential mixed-looking cinema too in Gottfried Jordan's *Vorstellung* (which in which an electrical with a writer's book finally ends) and *Welle* in love with an eleven-year-old girl and in *Fluss* as *Falkenberg* is *Tomas* (the which centers

mainly is defined by being in Italian with German subtitles).

In the interest of misanthropic wit, Dora Dörrie's new film *Panther* lead up to its title. With sovereign phrasms and striking visuals, the director of *Milner* (film) returns to the theme of the love in anger this time with a man in the middle. The result is no mean piece, but at least it is an entertaining cinema.

There were quite a few disappointing entries in the International selection too. Sandra Loo's emotional debut *Requiem* played to an empty cinema; the Swiss film *Martin in Licht* a *Cherchoscopia* tale about a prison painting — proved abundantly boring; and the best *Die Reich* was no consolation either.

There were a few good films at Hol however including *Katze* (Rosa's *Seven Deaths* which along with Neil Jordan's *More Love* (reviewed in this issue) was the best — a most beautiful film. The *Welt* was *Grüne* and for subtle psycho-analytic there was *Blue River* a silent feature by David Lynch with a nightmare trip around it (long trip). Jim Jarmusch's *Down by Law* (seen last night) and Hugh Hudson's *Revolution* (all had their German partners) and *Aus* (the was represented by *Milano* and *Calder*).

If Hol 1988 was a disappointment however, next year's festival already has its high spot lined up: the premiere of *Warner Horog* in *Colore* (the being shot in the jungles of Brazil).

Oliver Gewecke

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ORANA
TRUCK ! RENTALS

MOVIES BY MICROCHIP

The integration of film and video special effects is long overdue. It certainly seems an obvious move for a video design studio like The Video Paint Brush Company to share a building with film special effects company Mirage Effects, in the industrial estates of North Ryde. It has been brought about by the introduction of some new hardware that is of great importance to people in film and video. In the final part of his series, Fred Harden explains why filmmakers are wild about a device called Harry.



HARRY AT WORK. Temporary setup showing the Quantel Harry and Paintbox combo in action

HARRY, MEET MAX

Max Headroom, the first true talking head of television, needs no introduction to most industry people. He's not only one of the highest rated cult figures on British and American mass TV, he's also the star of the latest Australian and US Coca-Cola commercials. Ridley Scott, director of Blade Runner and Alien, has created two of the US Coke spots.

"Harry" is less well known, but he has developed a cult following of his own at The Video Paint Brush Company in Sydney. Harry is the name for the British company Quantel has given to its digital studio. The name promises to become better known among television production people than that of a reworking, video-processed actor, because Harry is the first taste of the way that digital video will change video production.

Digital television needs some explanation. It is not a new and incompatible system like high definition television which promises an widescreen film quality picture. It promises conformity by adopting a standard method of signal processing agreed to by the CCIR (International Radio Consultative Committee). Digital video works like compact disc, which uses digital sampling techniques to convert the continuous analogue audio signal into a form that closer approaches the dynamic range of the original signal, and eliminates noise and interference. Because of the high cost, the technology is limited to broadcast production and it will be a few years before we see a fully digital home set.

If you have not seen a device like the Quantel Paintbox in the hands of a

skilled designer, then Harry will look magical. It is not just a small improvement in quality, but a giant leap in philosophy of design and ease of operation.

The Paintbox was first introduced as an electronic paint system for broadcast stations which would replace the production of flat artwork. It was used mainly to grab frames of live video and convert them to digital images that could be reworked, painted over and edited back into the original tape.

Maxors of TV commercials could carry out frame-by-frame video reworking of products, add gloves and highlight sparkles, or fix mistaked mess in filming when the cost of a reshoot was prohibitive. The process was made easier by the development of true single-frame editing one-inch VTRs (video tape recorders), but there was a limit to the number of frames which could be stored on the hard disk drives of the Paintbox. The disks could only record and replay one frame every 1½ seconds, so that checking the result meant waiting on a number of frames individually and then recording them onto a VTR. This process was made easier by the new software update from Quantel (version PRG 4) which allowed the Paintbox to control the VTR, but there were still problems with pre-roll times and machine-to-machine signal loss. With the need for improved frame-by-frame handling, Quantel began to develop a real time recording system for TV, code-named Harry.

At the same time, they were preparing their digital effects system, Encore. This offered them existing digital effects machines like Ampex's ADO because it could also accept the standard CCIR digital

The concept of **Sampling** is the key to digital video (and audio). There has to be a way to break the continuously varying analogue signal into discrete bits of information to which a digital value or number can be attached. If you don't select the bits, or 'sample' the signal often enough the effect is the reverse. Sampling is too often, however, takes time and requires larger bandwidths to broadcast or store.

To sample a video signal under the CCIR 601 standard the luminance (brightness) part of the signal is sampled at 13.5MHz: that's thirteen and a half million cycles a second. The other two components that are subtracted to make up the three colours Red, Green and Blue are about half of that. In NTSC they are in the ratio of 4:2:2, so the new standard is referred to as Four Two Two.



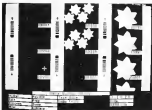
TALKING HEADROOM: Harry holds forth

input. This eliminates the losses and small distortions that occur when the analogue signals are decoded and encoded again, as is the standard procedure.

Harry was shown to interested users and their ideas were incorporated over an 18-month period. It now includes features like dissolves, luminance and chrominance keying, time code and GPI interfaces to allow it to be triggered from standard edit controllers. What started life as a digital recorder ended up as a digital studio and, along the way, Harry became known as Harry.

USING HARRY

I have watched Harry in use at Video Post Brush and seen both the impressive complexity of the work done with it, and an increasing number of potential uses. What you see looks like a conventional Paintbox graphics tablet, computer keyboard and high resolution monitor with the familiar 'boxed' on-screen menu occupying the bottom quarter of the screen. The state-of-the-art system is controlled by the stylus pen that is also used to draw in the Paintbox mode. Switching from the Paintbox to Harry is done by moving the cursor that shows



HARRY IN CLOSE UP: the three main editing areas



ditto, ditto

PENNY HARRY: Yes, it is a female body, a vital component of the US Game ad Harry helped produce

the pen to the correct box and pressing the pen tip down lightly.

SPECIFICATIONS

Harry has a totally random access store of 2000 frames, 80 sets of broadcast quality images. The material can come from a sequence of Paintbox images, or via the RGB decoder from a colour camera, or a videotape recorder. The images are stored as 'clips', and adding two clips together simply involves altering the display sequence. There is no re-recording or shuffling of material on the disks. It is only when making a dissolve that the actual dissolving frames are recorded separately. (Multiple dissolves are easy and the process can be repeated until the desired results are achieved.)

The material is stored as three clips, the equivalent of three VTMs. In the edit mode, the screen displays three strips of images, and eight points are selected by touching the cursor at the selected frame. The images can be 'told up and down so that the beginning or the end of any clip can be found, and there is even a movie-style flickering motion display. A browser at simply one frame mind continuously and slow or backward motion has the refinements of dissolves between frames to smooth out stretched material so that up to 2:1 time ratios will give good results. Backwards motion actually employs the field sequence in reverse.

Both luminance and chrominance keying are provided and can be used separately or together. The key quality is better than any mixing desk I've seen. Digital linear keying, softening and precise adjustments are possible. If another level of key is required, then the process can be repeated without generation loss. The chromakeyer can use any key colour by touching the required colour area with the pen, from that point it can be finely adjusted using the up and down arrow keys on screen or the keyboard. The superior keying ability allows Harry to build up multiple layers of images from Etcetera, overlaying them with absolutely no generation loss. Digital images don't even understand the concept

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When Harry is integrated with the Pinnacle and Encore, with all of them sharing images in digital format, the process is controlled by a cutting mechanism that presents the Harry clip's images, frame by frame. The result is re-recorded back into Harry. It is only during this process that you are conscious of waiting for the system. Everything else offers so much from a conventional edit suite that it is hard to believe everything is happening so quickly. Inserting frames into an existing sequence or deleting a single frame all takes place as fast as the selection can be made from the screen — and that's fast.

THE FUTURE

It is already possible to take a digital output from a telephone chair, and modern digital releases already allow for superior manipulation and wipe effects to be used. What we are waiting for is the digital videotape recorder, and as you will read from the accompanying item, Sony have set a delivery date of August, 1987 for Australia.

When Harry is combined with a digital VTR many of the existing time constraints are removed. The limitation of 60 seconds of material effectively eliminates the use of Harry for more than an average 30-second commercial compilation. It takes a long time to back up as many images as that onto digital storage tapes, and then record. A digital VTR would allow material to be studied back and forth without any quality loss, and only retained to a conventional one-inch format for release.

Harry is a major step forward in the development of a system of digital editing of images. It may not be the design most suited to a standard edit suite, but for images that involve animation or motion graphics, and complex keys that require re-scoped matte shapes or retouching, then the Pinnacle/Harry combination is close to perfect. The potential for complex special effects work for television is unlimited, and I for one, Mr. Headroom, still find that exciting.

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SONY DIGITAL VTR

Star attractions at the recent launch of new broadcast products by Sony in Sydney last month was the first production model digital video tape recorder that we have seen in Australia. Available next year for a mere \$270,000, the DWR-1000 has been as attractive to the industry that there is a rumoured backlog of more than three hundred orders, catching Sony (pleasantly) by surprise.

The DWR-1000 and the Digital Signal Processor that goes with it take up about the space of a standard 1" VTR, although it looks more like a Sony U-matic. The cassette used is, in fact, the same width, although the cassette

sides are stretched to allow up to a proposed 50 minutes. The front panel of the machine shows the 4322 badge, and the grey colour is a departure for the Sony line. Instead of a green fluorescent display there is a large flat-panel electroluminescent display, with changing menus selected from twelve buttons beside the display, and a row of changing function keys below it. There is even a graphic representation of the cassette reel spinning as it runs, so that you can tell the status of the tape remaining.

The main advantage of digitally recording the video and audio signals is the absolute replay of the recorded signal. There are four digital audio channels with a signal response comparable to Compact Discs. With error correction techniques, a digital tape copy is exactly like the original and even long deposits from clogged heads are corrected by sophisticated means. There is digital and analogue video input and the ability to output RGB and Betacam component signals.

In operation the picture quality is excellent, speeding at up to 40 times normal speed — forwards and back — still holds colour in the picture although it looks very different from the standard broadcast breakup. A freeze frame and plus or minus 1% times speed is possible before degradation of the picture is seen. Standard Cue and Time Code tracks are included and the DWR-1000 would fit into a normal edit suite without modification.

Of interest to producers making programmes for the US and NTSC markets is the ability to record both PAL and NTSC pictures at the flick of a switch. Making the digitised videotape recorder the mastering machine for overseas material would ensure higher quality than that of the usual standards conversion. Feed the output into a high resolution film recorder and the result should be far superior to any video picture other than HDV.

Contact details: Sony Australia, Broadcast Division
Melbourne Ph: (03) 859 4011, Sydney Ph: (02) 857 8887



The Celco 800A Film Recorder

CELCO Film Recorder

The use of videotape as a distribution medium for video and computer generated images is usually limited by the poor quality of video to film conversion. Computer images for motion picture use on slides are better suited for, but the distortions depend on the image being made with one particular computer and software combination.

Reproduction quality for press is a similar story. There are a few machines in Australia that serve the purpose for an occasional use, but we usually send the job overseas for the best results.

This is about to change with the announcement of the Australian dealership and local installation of one of the top range film recorders made by the US company Celco. Computer graphics house Sonvelcon in Melbourne have installed a CELCO 800A high speed, high resolution film recorder, providing a range of film formats from 16mm reels to 8 x 10 inch still. There are a number of software interfaces being written to allow the Celco to accept outside work from several different computer formats. One of the uses Sonvelcon hope will provide regular work for the machine is to output images from the LANDSAT satellite, which produces ultra-high resolution images from space for geographical analysis and oil and mineral exploration.

The Celco is highly regarded in the US. As an indication of the quality that can be obtained, MAGI Productions used a Celco to record most of the computer animation work they did on Walt Disney Productions's *Treasure*.

Further information can be obtained from Sonvelcon Productions Pty Ltd, 10-12 Boundary Street, South Melbourne, Ph: (03) 280 4622.

TRON: The great
Celco helped to make



THE HIT PART (above): Chris Haywood with Tiler Hooton. THE SHERLOCK DOG (below): Geoff Simpson shooting through with Bryan Brown and crew (left) and the actor's director George Ogilvie (right). Photos by Greg Kessels



THE HIT PART (above): Chris Haywood with Tiler Hooton. THE SHERLOCK DOG (below): Geoff Simpson shooting through with Bryan Brown and crew (left) and the actor's director George Ogilvie (right). Photos by Greg Kessels

Film production is slowing right down and though we might blame Australian summer holidays, it is more likely a general weariness in the industry about the future of "Oz" (following the APTC's discussion paper). Few producers are commissioning themselves, preferring to hold on to their scripts and package their product carefully. Some, but not all, developments are peaking their bags and seeking finance elsewhere. An William May of Skippy Industries said, "it's a matter of going to the States and selling in total lobsters." He is co-writer and executive producer of the \$2.76 million feature *Skippy and the Changer*, which is scheduled to shoot in 1987.

The courageous ones are the makers of the low budget feature *The Hit Part*, which began shooting in locations around Melbourne on 17 November. Chris Haywood plays a professional who goes up his job to fulfil a lifetime acting ambition. He tries his luck as an extra, seeks discovery in commercials and falls into all the traps of the entertainment industry. Other bit parts are played by the May, May of a *Scratching Team*, William Wilson, Wade and Paul Lynskey. Other features in production are the two Yoram Gross animation films, *Dot in Gnocchi Old Hollywood* and *Tom Australia*. With several animated telefeatures also in production at Burbank Film, activity is in children's cartoons. The Sydney projects include *Star Beauty*, *The Last of the Motocross* and *Red Hot*. Among Gorman's production

company International Film Management, is still in gear, with the political thriller *The Convicting Society* already scheduled to shoot in the new year. Based on the short story by Frank McCourt, it is being directed and co-produced by Michael Trammell, and stars Arthur Gillman, John Maffett, Heather Mitchell, Mark Lee and Dennis Miller. Gorman's other feature, a \$9.5 million musical, is in pre-production. Titled *The Rover One*, led John Giddeas is signed as director and producer.

The Gillian Armstrong feature *Age Two* and the horror movie *The Menopausal* — *Howling 2* (see the feature report in this issue, p. 32) both wrapped on 22 November and production was completed on Bob Ellis's *Warm Nights on a Snow Island* (see p. 32).

The *Three Gunshots*, called by its producers "Australia's first science fiction film," is also in post-production after a shoot that has taken in the Flinders Ranges, two sound stages and a studio at South Australia's Mawson Studios and a warehouse in Port Adelaide where few sets were built by production designer George Liddle. Co-producer Bob Lupton describes *The Three Gunshots* as "an adventure action sci-fi, a gang bang, shoot-out story. Seventy per cent of the problem lies in a fight or a chase or an optical or an animation or a psychotic or some kind of effect."

"It doesn't have the spacey clean look of *Star Wars*," he emphasises, "although it does have Carrie Fisher, her playing

not Princess Leia, but an expert from the future who specialises in the 20th century. Tom Gaudin's vision of the future is 'Industrial gritty multifunctional.' Lupton promises, but he will give no details about the monsters that have been created for the film. Their appearance is the subject of PR secrecy. Tom Gaudin's appearance is not detailed elsewhere, we will see Tom as we have never seen him, as a kind of Tom Cruise with teeth, Bob Lupton says. Chris Stockwell also appears in the film playing the boss of a time-travelling city.

More down to earth, the first six episodes of the documentary series *Australian Revolution* will be finished for Christmas. A sequel to the 1985 ABC programme *Inside Australia* (which printed local Australians from different backgrounds), it updates interviewees with the original subjects including Charles Perkins, Lillian Farrow and grocer Alan Thomas, to examine how the country has changed.

Members of the Queensland Expedition are now home safely with film stock. Directed by Mike Boland, this documentary traces the journey of explorer Goro Yoshino to the east coast of Queensland. Another adventure documentary *Don't* is in pre-production, documenting spectacular mountain climbs.

Closer to home, Ross Colbourne's docu-drama, *Sons of Bitches*, a history of prostitution in Australia, ended an eight-week shoot on 1 December.

On the TV horizon, there is the *Readers, Cooks & Carrots*

Channel Four telemovie *The First Kangaroo*, the first Australian-UK production to go ahead under the APTC co-production agreement. Directed by Frank Glenister, it is scheduled to shoot in March 1987.

Grawford Productions have a second series of *The Flying Doctors* going into production on 5 January while *The Henderson Kill* is rehearsing and filming.

At the ABC drama department it seems that the summer break is yet to be announced, with at least six projects of various stages in production. *The Legend King*, directed by Geoffrey Nottage and produced by Jan Chapman, got underway in November, and the eight-hour miniseries *The Wind and the Stars*, which is being produced with Network TV and Revolution Films, continues a long six-month shoot. The series *Phoenix* is in production and *John Fringo* is telecasting. *Afternoons*, starring Richard Moll and Angela Parnell McDougall, wrapped on 17 December, then may, directed by John Clarke, is in post-production.

In South Australia — where it all seems to be happening — *The Shadow* goes into post-production in mid-December and should be ready for the Seven Network in May. And in Melbourne, the finishing date for James Clayton's miniseries *With Tears in Rain* is February, there's lots of shooting and it's for anyone into detective stories.

As a further guide to what is coming up, the 1986 productions from Queensland and the APTC are listed in the production survey — they cover just about every genre imaginable.

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TO APPLY

Forward the following to the Creative Development Fund, AFC by 5pm on Friday January 16, 1987:

- 1) Final draft dialogue script (not shooting script); OR
- 2) Fully developed treatment for documentaries and other projects where a script is inappropriate; AND/OR
- 3) Sequence of storyboard for animation or where applicable; AND
- 4) Curriculum vitae of applicant or in the case of an applicant who is not the director, the curriculum vitae of the director.

Applicants whose proposals fit the guidelines and are considered ready for production will be invited to complete applications and budget forms.

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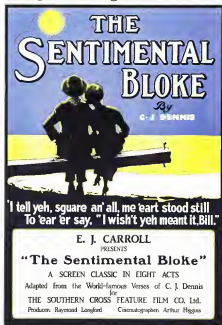
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